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FALL BOOKS

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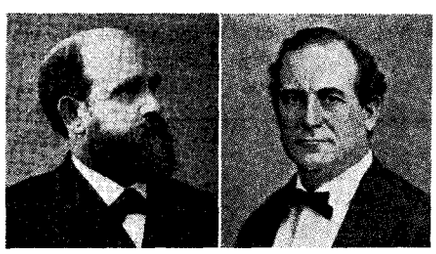
Books Into Ballots

The Influence of Yesterday's Political Thought on Today's Political Action

BY HENRY F. PRINGLE

IT would be interesting and certainly instructive if candidates for the Presidency followed the practice of historians and biographers and authenticated their sources with footnotes. Let us take the liberty of imagining a speech or two and see how they would appear, in print, if such a system were adopted.



Henry George, "an influence, although not directly," . . . on William J. Bryan.

"My friends," President Roosevelt might then say, "I shall tonight first discuss the subject of honesty in Government.[1] I shall then turn to the problems of the Federal Government in the solution of old-age and unemployment pensions.[2] And after that, with your kind permission, my friends, we shall review the long history of industrial growth and the prevention of monopoly."[3]

"I ask your support," Mr. Landon might say, "because the Republican party stands, four-square, for an efficient, orderly, non-corrupt Government.[1] If elected to the Presidency, ladies and gentlemen, I shall institute, with the cooperation of Congress, all necessary measures to banish want in times of unemployment and distress in old age, but this shall be done without extravagance.[2] The Republican party believes in the American system under which this great country has thrived and prospered, and is opposed to the entry of Government into business. We shall restore the competitive system and we shall effectively block monopoly in industry."[3]

I hope I am not being taken literally and that I shall not, in the heat of the current campaign, be assailed for having misquoted the President or Nominee Landon. The fictitious speeches are offered merely to indicate that today's politician is in debt to the authors of the more or less immediate past. It will be noted that the footnotes are for identical books; by this I mean that both the major political parties now draw heavily on yesteryear's governmental and economic philosophy. Needless to say, there is no implication that Messrs. Steffens, Beard, and Myers are the only authors who have left their mark on political thought. The group of which they are typical is long and honorable and cannot be enumerated in full here. Nor is it possible to examine the pamphleteers who wrote with such rare skill and force in the early days of the American Republic and so greatly swayed public opinion on constitutional issues.

By and large, the problems which torment the United States today are the ones which grew out of the change from an agricultural to an industrial economy. The perplexities of Mr. Jefferson were relatively simple. The ones which face Mr. Roosevelt—an heir of whom the Monticello Sage would almost certainly disapprove violently—are very complicated. Merely bravery and hardihood were needed when the vast velleys of the Mississippi River could still be settled or when it was still possible to push further into the prairies. A nation's economic frontiers are infinitely harder to reach and the leaders of today's wagon trains need acute intelligence more than bravery. Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Landon battle to lead those leaders. Behind them is a bulky literature of protest; of protest and of hopeful solution, too. The protest, as it relates to today's complexities, probably began with the 1873 depression. After that, the men of wealth grew more powerful and wealthier and the poor became desperate. At Yale, as the years went by, William Graham Sumner would be thundering against plutocracy, and when more decades had passed Franklin D. Roosevelt would adapt his phrase, "The Forgotten Man," to his own use. It was not a very accurate adaptation of Mr. Sumner's meaning, but it was a highly effective one.

Upton Sinclair shares credit with Theodore Roosevelt for the pure food laws.

William Graham Sumner supplied a phrase for Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The books began to appear, a few of them good and most of them indifferent. A boy named Henry George, sometimes a sailor and sometimes a printer, had gone to California in the wake of the gold rush and had been astonished at the wages of $500 a month being offered in San Francisco for cooks. It occurred to him that wages had soared on the Pacific Coast because land back in the hills had not yet been appropriated for private use. The men who had been cooks and the men who had been sailors—now their vessels lay idle and abandoned in the waters of the Golden Gate—rushed to these lands in the hills to seek gold. Henry George reasoned, with accuracy, that the wage increases would not have resulted if the gold lands had been in private hands, for the owners would then merely have hired miners. From this he progressed to the view that increased population brought higher land values and resulted in hardship for the men who lived on or off the land. The result, of course, was "Progress and Poverty" and the espousal of a tax on land alone. Millions of people read the book. It was an influence which shattered the confidence of the Republican Party and its

[1] Steffens, Lincoln: "The Shame of the Cities."
[2] Beard, Charles A.: "Economic Interpretation of the Constitution."
[3] Myers, Gustavus: "History of the Great American Fortunes."

Next Week

THE VANDALS OF HOLLYWOOD
By GILBERT SELDES

PORTRAIT OF AN ERA
By FAIRFAX DOWNEY
Reviewed by Frederick Lewis Allen

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series of Presidents, so accurately described by Nathaniel Hawthorne as the "bullet headed generals" who had won fame in the Civil War. It was an influence, although not directly, for the Commoner never endorsed the single tax, on William Jennings Bryan and the Populist movement of the '90s.

Mr. John Chamberlain, in his penetrating if somewhat fretful "Farewell to Reform," has analyzed throughly the books which made their mark as the century closed and a new one began. Thorstein Veblen, brilliant but bitter, offered his "Theory of the Leisure Class" in 1899 and Gustavus Myers, whose importance in the field of political and social writing has never properly been recognized, published the "History of Tammany Hall" in 1901. It deserved a better fate than its position as a curtain-raiser for the more popular works of Lincoln Steffens. John Dewey wrote "School and Society," which offered a thesis repugnant to the rich men of the day: that education should be geared to social and political questions, and not to the lavender and pink problems of the upper classes.

Mark Hanna succeeded in reëlecting McKinley, and J. P. Morgan, relieved that the menace of Bryan had been turned back again, began the organization of the United States Steel Corporation. Theodore Roosevelt, greatly bored in the Vice-presidency, mourned that his public career was over and considered studying law, a calling for which he had small use. But everything changed when McKinley was assassinated and Roosevelt entered the White House, although not precipitately. The muckrakers, not yet so labelled by Roosevelt, were unleashing their typewriters. Frank Norris attacked the Southern Pacific Railroad in "The Octopus" and the President warned Owen Wister that the volume was Bryanesque in its overstatements, that "the facts alleged in 'The Octopus' are a wild travesty of the truth." Roosevelt does not appear to have been much impressed at the start, either, by Ida Tarbell's "History of the Standard Oil Company" which began serial publication in *McClure's Magazine* in October, 1902. Steffens was soon swinging into action and Ray Stannard Baker, also for S. S. McClure, was attacking the railroads. At the dinner of the Gridiron Club in March, 1906, the President deprecated all these onslaughts and quoted the man in "Pilgrim's Progress" who kept his eyes only on filth and dirt.

Roosevelt soon changed his mind, however. Even his kinsman, now the incumbent of the White House, has no keener ear than Theodore Roosevelt had for the currents of public opinion. Safely elected in his own right in 1904, Roosevelt started his crusades against the malefactors of wealth and he discovered that no small part of the battle had been fought for him by Miss Tarbell, Baker, and the rest. He listened more carefully, then, to Upton Sinclair, whose "Jungle" appeared in the spring of 1906. This was an attack on the Chicago packers, whose plants reeked with disease and dirt. Sinclair shares with Roosevelt the credit for the enactment of pure food legislation.

Gustavus Myers, meanwhile, was painstakingly at work on his greatest book, a three-volume "History of the Great American Fortunes" which finally was completed in 1909 and 1910. It was not, unfortunately, very widely read. Myers wrote facts, not literature. But his book became the great source work for those who argued that the great fortunes of America had been accumulated because the Government had been too weak or too corrupt to prevent the forays and the exploitations of the shrewd, forthright, merciless, and often criminal men whom Matthew Josephson would one day call "The Robber Barons."

The golden age of the writer as a political factor was just beginning when, in March, 1909, Theodore Roosevelt retired from the Presidency with reluctance and with misgivings that anyone else was comparably talented for the high office. Revolution and change were in the air and William Howard Taft, forced to accept the Republican nomination by Roosevelt, would find it utterly impossible to deal with them. It would be inaccurate to say the writers, of whom the chief were Dr. Beard, Walter Weyl, Herbert Croly, and Walter Lippmann, had caused the winds of change to blow. That honor belongs, I am sure, to the politicoes. Bryan had been the evangel of reform since the '90s and he had watched certain of his ideas being appropriated by men whom the best people regarded as less dangerous and more respectable; specifically, by Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. Robert M. LaFollette of Wisconsin had been calling for social betterment and for control of big business. In the House of Representatives a battle was in progress to take control away from the Old Guard; the leader of this was George W. Norris of Nebraska. The emotional voice of Albert Beveridge was also resounding in the land. And then, of course, there was Woodrow Wilson who once had been an author and a professor himself, but who now, more than anything else, was an active participant in politics.

But the writers played a major role. J. Allen Smith, for instance, analyzed the Constitution of the United States in his "History of American Government," and actually dared to say that it was imperfect. Dr. Beard was preparing his very influential "Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States," although it would not be published until 1913. It was Weyl, Croly, and Lippmann who had programs, however. They knew, or thought that they did, a cure

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Photographs on cover by Disraeli (see page 42)

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Crackerbox Commentator

'T AINT RIGHT. By Westbrook Pegler. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by BERNARD DEVOTO

AMERICAN journalism, a favorite whipping-boy of the indignant, has developed many institutions of the greatest value to democracy. Prominent among them is the village thinker, the crackerbox commentator on men and events, who today, *mutatis mutandis,* is the daily columnist. With collateral branches as early as Benjamin Franklin, the direct line goes back exactly one hundred and six years to Major Jack Downing of the Portland *Courier,* and it is an honorable line. It is rooted in admirable qualities of the democratic intelligence, realism, skepticism, a vigorous equalitarianism, a belief in the necessity of holding public figures to public account, a determination to expose in the public interest humbug and arrogance and the vulgarities of privilege and the high-handedness of authority. Even the briefest outline of American culture would have to list several score of its practitioners. Hosea Biglow is inseparably linked with the anti-slavery movement; Mr. Dooley touches the two decades following Free Silver at nearly every point. Mark Twain was an editorial satirist as early as he was a humorist, and he worked vigorously all his life at the trade he had learned on the Virginia *Enterprise.* Johnson J. Hooper, the creator of Simon Suggs, was from the same mold; so was Charles Henry Smith; so was Bert Leston Taylor. In short, there has always been someone widely read, conspicuously placed, and well endowed with courage who said forcibly whatever he thought about anything at all and performed a notable public service in doing so. Such is Mr. Westbrook Pegler's lineage and tradition, and he is a credit to both of them.

Pinchot

WESTBROOK PEGLER

He knows his way around, he is hard-boiled, he has guts—and also he has in quintessence the shrewdness and topicality of the tradition. At a time when the people who write the editorial column discuss Hitler and Mussolini in metaphysical terms, it is refreshing to read Mr. Pegler's treatment of them as common racketeers, the raw material of whose following he has seen on the United Cigar Store corner. That kind of treatment gets somewhere; metaphysics seldom does. A realistic logic frequently puts him on the unpopular side, as when he dares to say that Californians have some rights in the Mooney case: "And, anyway, if it was so wrong to send Mooney away, how wrong is it of the Russians nowadays to stick a man up against a wall and splatter him with a volley merely because his mind found fault with the operation of the great experiment?" He is forthright about a good many things round which more stately editors prefer to pussyfoot, and has the courage to say what he thinks even when it is outrageously wrong, as in the famous column about the San José lynchings. To write that column was an act of conspicuous bravery and though its central point is intolerable, what it says about storms of right-mindedness is unanswerable. Mr. Pegler knows what the saved forget, that the service of virtue may also produce mob hysteria.

Nearly every item in "'T Aint Right" has the bite of pertinent comment expertly set down. On the Nazis and Mussolini, on post-boom Paris, on the vulgarity of the English press, Mr. Pegler is superb, but he is even better on our native obscenities. His parodies of Mr. Brisbane and Mr. McIntyre will travel on their own power for a long time yet. "Does Mellon Want It All?" is diatribe in the classical tradition; so are "Your Honor Is a Bum" and "Master Shysters" and "Communist Propagandists." "Memories of H. H." is merciless in its denunciation of trimming and cowardice, but anyone who mistakes it for New Deal propaganda may read "Pop-Bottle Barrage," a small masterpiece, and be reassured.

To remain unawed by authority, to attack usurpation, to assert the common rights of the democratic man, "the generally unpressed, wrinkle-necked, cross-section lot who live in small towns and take their country, their Prohibition, and their politics seriously"—surely that is an invaluable service to the commonwealth. So is Mr. Pegler's vigilance in denouncing privilege and display and official hypocrisy and plutocratic tyranny. So is his constant assertion of private decencies and the dignity of the individual—when the individual isn't acting like a fool. The form has changed a good deal since Jack Downing set out for Portland but under the syndicated masthead the outlines of the immortal crackerbox are unmistakable. While someone of Mr. Pegler's ability is sitting on it, spitting on the stove, and telling us why he doesn't think so much of the folks in Washington—it is far too early to despair of our institutions.

And how the man can write! "When Mr. Mellon was in office he was often referred to by the Republicans of those days as the best secretary of the treasury since Alexander Hamilton. This was a proud statement, but it didn't mean much to the forgotten man, because the truth of the matter is that most people don't know anything about Hamilton beyond the fact that he fought a duel with Aaron Burr at Weehawken and forgot to duck." Or, "His hat is dirty. It flops over his ear. There is fringe on the cuffs of his pants. He looks rained on. He is rained on. He got all wet a long time back and never dried out." If that is journalese, highbrows had better find a new epithet expressing disdain.

The Last Empress and the Boxer Rebellion

THE FLIGHT OF AN EMPRESS. By Wu Yung. Translated and edited by Ida Pruitt, with an introduction by Kenneth Scott Latourette. Yale University Press. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by LIN YUTANG

THE last Empress Dowager of China has recently received her fair bit of attention in the English publishing world. Somehow the powerful figure fascinates and holds our attention as the female ruler who controlled China's destiny for half a century and pulled that destiny down as Queen Victoria pulled England's up. A little accident changed that entire destiny. Had not Yuan Shih-k'ai decided to betray Emperor Kuanghsu when the latter was staging his coup d'état against the Empress in the fateful fall of 1898, China might have evolved more gradually under the enthusiastic reformist Emperor. As it was, the Empress's rule was lengthened for another decade, which finally made the collapse of the empire unavoidable.

The present book is an addition to those volumes on the Empress Dowager (of which the most readable remains Bland and Backhouse's "China Under the Empress Dowager"), but is different from them first, in that it is an account of his

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firsthand impressions by a Chinese official Wu Yung (alias Yu-ch'uan), who attended upon the Empress during her flight from the capital after the entry of Allied troops into Peking in 1900; and secondly, in that the story centers almost entirely upon the Boxer Uprising and the consequent flight. One gains thus an intimate glimpse of the Boxers, their methods and superstitions, the powerful and forceful personality of the Empress, the then completely subdued Emperor, the Eunuch Li Lien-ying, the Empress's favorite Jung Lu, and a mixed picture of upright and avaricious officials. A really intimate portrait is made of the scheming Yuan Shih-k'ai, the cruel Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan hovering over the career of the author like his evil genius, and above all, the interesting Li Hung-chang. And in the background, one sees the comical credulity of the people, their hatred of the Christian missions, the amazing popularity of the Boxers (a secret society which attained such power as to try magistrates, run riot in the capital, and have its devotees among members of the palace), and the amazing incompetence and lack of discipline of the imperial guards.

The idea that the Empress Dowager should have ordered a fight against the legations at Peking and virtually declared war against the entire world is so amazing that sometimes it is difficult to understand its coming from this sagacious woman. However, let the author tell the story as the Empress Dowager had told him.

> . . . the main trouble was that Jung Lu gave incorrect information and the Empress Dowager thought, as she was told, that the Powers had already declared war [on China]. She had called this audience primarily to consider how to fight and not whether to fight or remain at peace. She felt that to fight or to be at peace was no longer the question. And her ministers did not understand the situation. They thought it was to discuss peace or war. . . . Their answers were all unexpected by the Empress and finally everything was wrong; the more they talked the more they were at variance. After the meeting they questioned each other about the news that the Powers had declared war. Neither the Grand Council nor the great officials had had any word of it. They were all surprised. Jung Lu had sent his memorial secretly and no one else ever saw it. Had her courtiers known of what Jung Lu had done they could easily have told the Empress that the foreigners had not declared war and trouble would have been avoided.

Above all, from this little volume of memoirs stands out the character of the author, a courageous mandarin who had the audacity to fight the Boxers single-handed, the folly to let a golden chance for fattening his purse slip through his fingers, and the wisdom of resigning from office before the revengeful Ts'en Ch'un-hsuan could pursue him to his ruin. A genuine memoir well worth a night's reading.

Lin Yutang *(see page 8)* *is the author of "My Country and My People."*

Getting Serious About Laughter

IN PURSUIT OF LAUGHTER. By Agnes Repplier. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1936. $2.75.

Reviewed by DAVID MCCORD

THE first enchantments of the Middle Ages were certainly not laughter, and Miss Repplier's rich and embroidered essay loses—perhaps inevitably—its first and only ground by starting pursuit where no quarry is in sight. She admits as much; but the admission invites the reader at once to cold porridge and thereby violates one of the cardinal principles of the essay as entertainment. "The ready laughter of the Middle Ages," she says, "is unavoidably left out. It has slumbered for five epoch-making centuries, and might sound unauthorized in our ears." That is no idle conclusion, even in the presence of so pleasant a persuader as Miss Helen Waddell. What laughter Miss Repplier can find there is a faint distorted echo. Her book really begins with the Elizabethans.

Disraeli

AGNES REPPLIER

From then on her chapters are strong and jellyful of history, anecdote, and supporting wit. It is only a fair *caveat* to the prospective reader that this essay of so engaging a title is not, nor is intended to be, a rollicking performance. It was Max Beerbohm (whom she fails to mention) who remarked that of laughter nobody ever died. But in the midst of its creators, even back to the Middle Ages, I can think of no one save Meredith and Stephen Leacock who have ever attempted to run it down for its own reverberating sake. Indeed, it has long needed the recognized blessing such as this. We have been like Elizabeth's Episcopalian during the bishopless years of Oxford, Wells, and Ely: "Who in Hell will confirm us?" he said.

If Elizabeth's half literate England "was short of laughter, and was beginning to want to laugh," the way was opened under the Restoration and Charles the Second—in whose defense the essayist is at her excellent best. "We know the degree of refinement in men by the matter they laugh at and by the ring of the laugh," said Meredith—a truism which must have been observed before. The Restoration laughed too loud—and too long, if I remember its plays. Landor went deeper than Meredith: "Genuine humor and true wit require a sound and capacious mind, which is always a grave one." The contemporaries of John Bunyan, who were also the approximate contemporaries of Dryden, Farquhar, Vanbrugh, were on the wrong track. Most of their laughter died with them, which is not perhaps as much our fault as theirs. Since 1700 the English have laughed more steadily—and better.

This is not a definitive essay. The people who become its pegs might be other people: Dr. Johnson for Hogarth, the early Pope for the later Hood, more of Gilbert and less of Sir Joshua Reynolds. It does not matter. Wit clings to them like barnacles, and the best of Miss Repplier's work is in example rather than in theory: "Hook sat down again, and rattled off an improvised ballad about the goodness and badness of the shots. Coleridge, overcome by admiration and by punch, pronounced him a genius, as great as Dante, only different."

America comes in at the end of the book. From an American pen, and because we call ourselves a humorous if not a witty people, we might expect somewhat more. I doubt if we deserve it. But I doubt also, and without research, that our recorded laughter does not antedate Mr. Artemus Ward. "What the pun was to England," says Stephen Leacock, and Miss Repplier repeats it, "bad spelling was to America" (*vide* Ward, Billings, Nye, and Lowell). But she forgets that in the hands of such wits as Messrs. Christopher Morley, Louis Untermeyer, and F. P. A., the American pun is dying a new death every day. Mr. DeVoto will want something said for frontier humor, but he will approve the homage to Mark Twain. Beyond, on either shore, there is more laughter than she has pursued. *Punch* was founded in 1841: What of the *New Yorker*? Rather than ask, I shall merely disagree with Freud who believes that laughter is a release of static energy, a free and joyous waste of a force which might be stored and utilized. Let us waste it. Or Miss Repplier, in her own inimitable way, can do it for you.

David McCord, poet and essayist, is the author of "Oddly Enough," "Bay Window Ballads," and other books. He was formerly on the drama and music staff of the Boston *Transcript, and associate editor of the* Harvard Alumni Bulletin.

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The Mystery of Saint Joan

SAINT JOAN OF ARC. By V. Sackville-West. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $3.

Reviewed by MILTON WALDMAN

GO at it as he may, the biographer of Joan of Arc is bound to find himself entangled in the dilemma of proceeding upon evidence to reconstruct a story with which evidence is incompetent to deal. The facts show, beyond the faintest shadow of a doubt, that a seventeen-year-old girl, illiterate and a peasant, went forth from her home to do a great and improbable thing; a thing so great and improbable that it was unlikely almost beyond belief that ordinary human beings should ever have given her the chance to try. Yet they did, and she succeeded. She declared that she was sent by God, through personal instruction from His saints, and her contemporaries, both the vulgar and those in authority, acceded to her mission on that basis: indeed they would have accepted her on no other. Only it happens that we, the great majority of us at least, find it impossible to take so simple a view of the causes of her impulse, her acceptance, her achievement. But we have no other to take that will remotely satisfy the criticisms of our intelligence.

Miss Sackville-West puts the dilemma with neatness and a sort of poignant clarity: "I am in the unfortunate position," she confesses, "of anybody torn between an instinctive reliance on instinct, and a reasonable reliance on reason. . . .

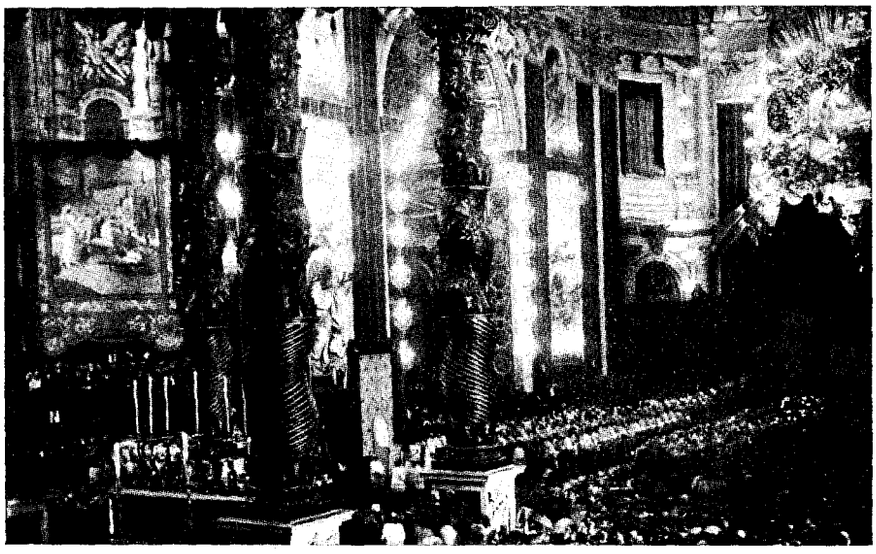
> Our ignorance and limitations, indeed, are still such that we may well question the audacity of approaching such a question at all. We are in the position of a schoolboy who, having attained to some acquaintance with simple or even compound fractions, would aspire to comment on the higher mathematics. The outcome of such an attempt in the eyes of an informed mathematician would be piteous and laughable in the extreme. Just as piteous, in the eyes of succeeding and more enlightened generations, may be the attempts of the childish twentieth century to fumble towards the explanation of a phenomenon which to the more adult information of the future may offer no difficulties whatsoever. It is possible, conceivable, and indeed probable that with the expansion of our knowledge in the physical, physiological, and psychical worlds such problems may cease to be problems and may become the commonplace of ordinary information.

In other words the understanding of Joan and her Voices may belong to the twenty-fifth century as once it belonged to the fifteenth, but lies outside the grasp of the twentieth. That, I think, is true.

But if the mystery remains, so does the splendid story which it suffuses, and Miss Sackville-West makes a first-rate job of the retelling. Of the facts everything is there that one could reasonably want to know, nothing amplified that a good biography could sensibly do without. The narrative flows along ever so easily, sympathetically, each detail chosen with care and right instinct, every obscure point argued out skilfully and without parade. And from the whole emerges a most satisfactory picture of the swart, short-necked, close-cropped girl, downright, straightforward, exalted all at the same time, one palpably no less at home in her father's earthy cabin on the banks of the Meuse than in the circle of her heavenly father's saints to which she from her thirteenth year aspired.

In one conclusion I strongly dissent from Miss Sackville-West, that Joan "possessed no special qualifications for her tremendous mission." I do not think that the mystery lies there; the girl plainly had the soldier's genius that appears to visit those of her race in particular regardless of age or sex. To doubt is not only to doubt the facts but to bring in another element of obscurity into those very simple, elementary battles—as well as to align one's self with the maddening condescension of Anatole France which Miss Sackville-West so rightly scorns. I also doubt whether Charles VII was quite the ass she makes him out to be. And one thing many will vaguely miss—the sense of Joan as a symbol of her sex's highest aspirations, passions even, which only a biographer who was a poet as well as a woman could have illuminated.

Milton Waldman is the author of a number of historical biographies, including a life of Joan of Arc. His "Catherine de Medici and Her Family" is about to appear.



THE CANONIZATION OF JOAN OF ARC AT ST. PETER'S IN 1920

Fox Hunting Officer

SHERSTON'S PROGRESS. By Siegfried Sassoon. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $2.

Reviewed by A. W. SMITH

MR. SASSOON wrote of a Fox Hunting Man and an Infantry Officer appealingly, objectively, and with sympathetic humor. From civilized maturity he wrote of a Sherston who once was and now is not. There was a promise that the young Sherston would grow up. But Sherston, it seems, never grew up. Mr. Sassoon still writes of him as one who was, but in a manner which makes it appear that he still is.

The book begins where the "Infantry Officer" left off. The first third deals with Sherston, an inmate of a shell-shock hospital in Edinburgh (like all Mr. Sassoon's fictitious names the disguise is easily penetrated). Sherston had made himself notorious with his statement—ultimatum—what you will, declaring that he would no longer take part in the war. He had thrown the ribbon of his Military Cross into the Mersey; he was refusing to accept his pay.

At Slateford Hospital he played a lot of golf and spent a lot of time cleaning his clubs. At last he was able to compromise with conscience or to overcome his neurosis, whichever way one prefers to look at it. He demanded to be sent back to France.

The last half of the book has been taken without apparent alteration from a youthful and not very entertaining diary which covers war experiences in Palestine and France. At that time, when Barbusse was considered subversive and disloyal to the cause, it would have found an appreciative audience. It is very heartening and quite synthetic and might have formed the basis of his letters to his Aunt Evelyn, telling only as much as it was good for her to know.

A. W. Smith, an officer in the British Army during the war, is the author of "A Captain Departed."

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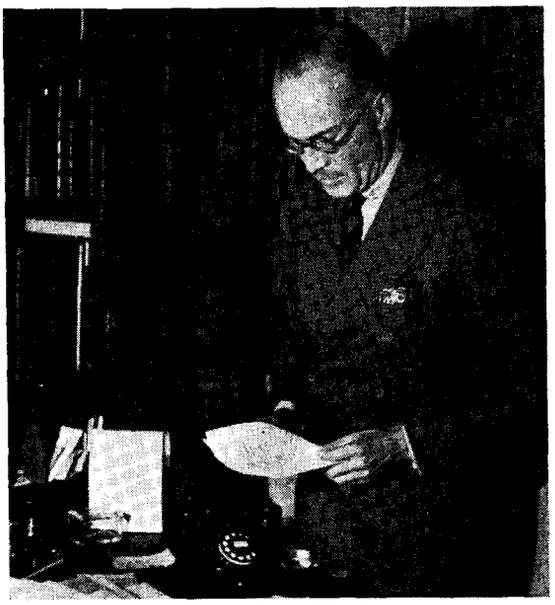
Meet the

Saturday Review News Pictures

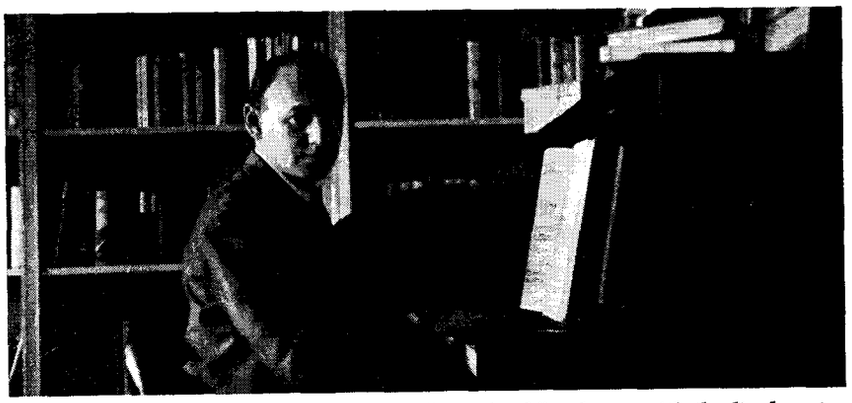
LIN YUTANG, *author of "My Country and My People," interviewed in* Asia *magazine's offices. He will spend the next year near Princeton, N. J., writing a book on the art of living.*

Dr. Lin explains to the Herald Tribune *reporter that the art of living doesn't mean philosophy or "high-flown thoughts" but "the superficialities of which life is made up."*



COL. RALPH W. ISHAM, *owner of the Boswell MSS from which the first complete edition of the "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides" will be issued next month, holds an unpublished letter from Voltaire to Boswell. Writing in English from Ferney, Voltaire disclaims knowledge of the soul, and refers Boswell to young scholars and priests.*

CORNELIA OTIS SKINNER, *widely known monologuist of "The Wives of Henry the Eighth," takes a bow for her book of humorous sketches, "Excuse It, Please." Here she is with clippings of early reviews.*



GILBERT SELDES (*above*), *author of "Mainland," at home with the lively art of George Gershwin;* I. J. SINGER (*below*), *who wrote "The Brothers Ashkenazi," occupies an editorial desk in the office of* The Jewish Daily Forward.

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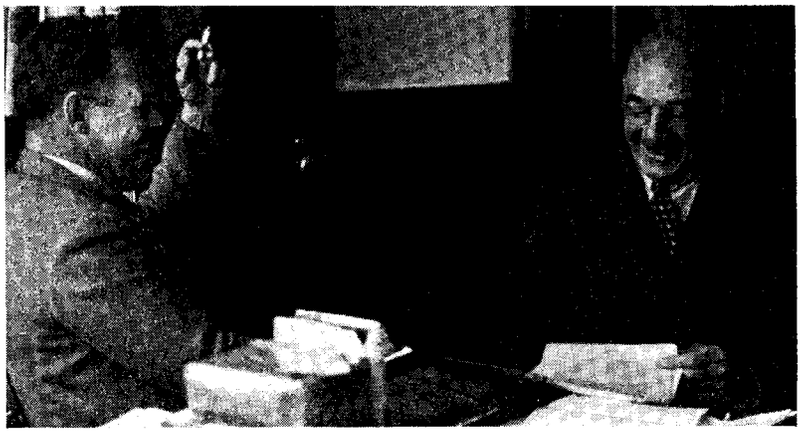
Authors . . .

of the Month by Robert Disraeli

P. G. WODEHOUSE *(above), with Mrs. Wodehouse and their Pekes, en route to Hollywood, where he will write for MGM . . .* MARJORIE HILLIS *(below), author of "Live Alone and Like It," in her Tudor City apartment.*

JOHN MASEFIELD *(above) who came to America to read his poem written for the Harvard Tercentenary . . . (Right) Photographers represented in "U. S. Camera, 1936" (Disraeli among them) exhibit at Radio City.*

DR. VICTOR G. HEISER *(right) tells Storer Lunt of W. W. Norton & Co. (his publishers) how he was saved from after-dinner speaking in Samoa...*



. . . because the Samoans, who take oratory seriously, got a professional speaker for him. The story is told in "An American Doctor's Odyssey."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

BERNARD DEVOTO . . . . . Editor
NOBLE A. CATHCART . . . . . Publisher
AMY LOVEMAN . . . . . Associate Editor
GEORGE STEVENS . . . . Managing Editor
HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT, CHRISTOPHER MORLEY } Contributing Editors

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The Code Napoleon

BY an inscrutable paradox of criticism, unpretentious fiction is judged under the Code Napoleon whereas fiction which sets out to be literature is granted the more comfortable jurisdiction of the Common Law. Let a novelist intend only to entertain the leisure moments of his audience with a good story about recognizable people, and no matter how effectively he does what he intended to do, reviewers will denounce him in the court house square for not writing "Ulysses." He may have mastered his technique, he may give his audience the momentary pleasure he aimed to, he may thoroughly succeed within the terms he set himself, he may display superior intelligence and expert craftsmanship—but if it is possible to call the material trivial, frivolous, or even unimportant, then he is sternly told to remember Thomas Mann and sentenced to the literary doghouse. The clumsiest workman or the most mediocre intelligence, however, need only to tackle the cosmic in order to begin, so far as the reviewers are concerned, with high, low, jack, and the game already in his hand. An implicit assumption of importance is all that a novelist needs to be treated with respect, though a confident assertion on his own behalf will serve him even better. There exists a relative scale of importance which changes somewhat with the fashion, conferring significance *per se* on novels about the ileac aspects of farm life at one time, on novels of beautiful despair at another time, and on novels about the tonic spirituality of farm life sometime later. But also there appears to be a fixed scale which makes it impossible at any time to write an unimportant novel about homosexuality, for example, or about the defeat of a generation or the philoprogenitiveness of an eccentric family or the soul of America. And anyone at all who writes with sixteen-cylinder pretentiousness customarily finds that he has to prove not that he is important but only that he doesn't want to be unimportant. His book is customarily reviewed on the soundest of Victorian principles: not failure but low aim is crime.

A more sensible basis would be the exact contrary. Writers who intend to offer no competition to Jules Romains ought not to be assailed for not intending to. Confronting a novel which sets out merely to tell a good story, report topically some of the moods of the moment, or be gay or melancholy about something less fundamental than the law of falling bodies, a reviewer ought to be required to deal with it in its own terms. The reviewer may be saddened by the depravity of a novelist who chooses to write a good yarn when mankind is clearly not yet saved, civilization is at the crossroads, and all the artistic possibilities of incest have not yet been explored. But that choice is not the reviewer's affair, and if he uses his space bidding the author repent for the hour is at hand, slanging him with Joyce, or pointing out how dreadfully the yarn falls short of the everlasting verities, he not only makes something of an ass of himself but betrays the reader as well. The reader may not be interested in salvation or even in Joyce, though actively interested in good yarns and in learning whether this is one of them. The reviewer's job is to tell him —to appraise the book according to the standards of its kind and intent. To be interested in good reading, as distinguished from literature, is not actionable under statute or in equity, and to write a book for the purpose of entertaining someone or describing experience less than eternal is surely not crime.

But just as surely, when it comes to literature failure is the worst crime and no loftiness of aim can atone for it. The writer who sets himself the highest goal must reach it—or criticism should lay him by the ears. The art of fiction is austere; it is so important that it cannot permit fumbling, indirection, awkwardness, or fake. Unhappily, many people try to practise it with no more equipment than a pure soul, a fervent heart, and the most commendable intent; and unhappily critics are prone to accept such equipment as enough. A number of sizable reputations today rest on the single fact that their possessors have sweated mightily at a job so noble in conception or so vague in meaning that it must be great. Certain leading novelists have never expressed an idea complex or mature or subtle enough to trouble the intelligence of a high school boy, and one has no difficulty in remembering others who write English as if doing calisthenics with a bad cold. But they are or seem to be men of great seriousness, and the jobs to which they apply themselves heave with solemnity, and that has been enough. They seem to be grappling with the cosmos and so criticism is content to call them great.

All of which is clearly wrong. Rather, let the novelist beware, the ambitious novelist, the novelist as artist. He undertakes to tell us something true about the world and mankind, to illuminate some part of the darkness, to dissipate some of the mystery of experience, to reconcile or propitiate us with genuine emotions wrought out of genuine knowledge in the profundities of the soul. It is an exalted undertaking and it does the novelist great credit, but let him enter upon it at his peril. It calls for the highest possible attributes, and he had better have them. If he does not tell us truth, then he is a failure and must be denounced as one in the interest of the art he serves. If he does not dissipate mystery and illuminate darkness, he will be just tawdry. If he does not have the knowledge he pretends to have, he will be mere fake and the intensity of his dedication will be no defence. The obligation of criticism is to insist that he be good or to denounce him as intolerably bad. For criticism, his purpose and his purity, however high, however honorable, however solemn, can never substitute for achievement. They must be disregarded altogether and the thing itself must succeed or the art of fiction is mocked.

Let the two codes be reversed. Ask of a book only that it shall do what it starts out to do—but insist on its doing that. In unpretentious fiction there is room for charity, and the Common Law should apply: let a book be considered good until it is shown to be bad. But the art of fiction, to protect itself from the mediocre, the bungling, the pretentious, and the phony, must insist on more rigorous judgment. If a book presents itself as important, if it aspires to high achievement, then criticism must put the onus of proof on the defence, on the book itself, and must hold that it is bad unless that it can unanswerably demonstrate that it is first-rate.

Ten Years Ago

The Fall Announcement Number of *The Saturday Review* in 1926 included reviews of a number of widely read books. Among them was Montgomery Belgion's review of Arnold Bennett's "Lord Raingo," reputedly a *roman à clef* based on the character of Lord Beaverbrook. Mr. Belgion admitted the grounds for this contention, but presented even stronger evidence to the contrary, pointing out that if Lord Raingo *"has any prototype at all, it is Mr. Bennett himself as Mr. Bennett reveals himself in his various writings."* Of the conclusion of this novel, the reviewer wrote: *"I believe it is one of the most remarkable passages in modern fiction, standing beside Mr. Bennett's own famous account of an execution in 'The Old Wives' Tale.'"*

Reviewed in the same issue were "Harmer John," by Hugh Walpole, "The Ninth Wave," Carl Van Doren's only novel, and "The Chariot of Fire," Bernard DeVoto's second novel.

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Letters to the Editor: *Edward Dean Sullivan on Louis Adamic's Review*

"This Labor Union Racket"

SIR:—Louis Adamic regards my book, "This Labor Union Racket," as extremely objectionable and that is all right with me. The fact is that Mr. Adamic in the matter of labor, has long and notably lacked coördination between his hand and foot. While apparently extending the hand of friendship he has been for years kicking labor in its most sensitive slats. He has been brought to book for it many times too.

My book was aimed essentially at labor fakers in the ranks of honest American labor but all of my writing applies as well to that type of labor "sympathizer" who plays "knock, knock" with three syllable words while using one syllable words as an anesthetic for labor readers themselves. There are many writers in this country who "take over" a subject in their own minds and who seem to feel that anyone who discusses any phase of that subject is intruding. Adamic is one of them but there are others. . . .

I have been covering crime and criminals for twenty years and when some of the greediest and ablest of the racketeers have hopped into the labor field the time has come to say a word or two about it.

Adamic complains that I don't seem to know how the racketeering thieves got into organized labor. I used to review books that carelessly. The fact is I do know and set it forth clearly in my book, though it remained among the virtues missed or booted by Mr. Adamic. Anyway, the question isn't so much how they got in as how to get them out. If Mr. Adamic caught a burglar in his home he would doubtless sit down, pencil in hand, to learn why the culprit ever took up such despicable work. Most people would devote that same time to calling a cop. I would.

The American Federation of Labor has long since without due process, appointed itself the protector of labor in this country. The charges against it brought in my book include being off post for ten years, using a feather duster for purposes of discipline, and total indifference to the well warranted complaints of some of the best elements both in American labor and industry.

It would seem time that the natives returned to some perspective regarding the legions of labor thugs who—on a national scale—gyp labor, industry, and the public generally to the literal tune of billions a year.

As for the eager communist influx into this national oppression and confusion, Mr. Adamic says:

> Mr. Sullivan makes much of the Communist Party in this country. He quotes Stalin on the importance of the American communist movement, NOT REALIZING THAT STALIN CAN BE A HUMORIST.

Which introduces for the first time anywhere that rib-busting wag, who not only heads but tails the Russian Paradise. Let's all give him a great big foot!

Ah, Mr. Adamic, there is much that might be said on that inspired comment but considering space and other complications a single word will suffice—phooey!

EDWARD DEAN SULLIVAN.

New York City.

"THIS FALL WE'RE GOING TO CHANGE OUR NAME FROM 'THE LITTLEFIELD BROWNING SOCIETY' TO 'THE LITTLEFIELD BICYCLE CLUB.'"

Louis Adamic's Reply

SIR:—My one labor book, "Dynamite," is widely read by workers throughout the country and has been used for years in sociology and economics classes in numerous colleges where, I think it may be assumed, teachers are not interested in having students see labor kicked in the slats. It is critical of labor leadership, *not* of labor—and of labor leadership not as an isolated cesspool of evil, as Mr. Sullivan treats it in his book, but objectively in relation to the whole socio-economic mess in America.

Mr. Sullivan indirectly and unwittingly explains himself in the third paragraph of his letter.

The fourth paragraph, about the thief and the cop, is too ridiculous for comment. I'll merely ask: Who is the "cop" Mr. Sullivan is calling? On second thought I can't resist asking another question: Did he ask himself if the "cop" possibly isn't a worse criminal than the thief he thinks he has caught? And another: Isn't it possible that Mr. Sullivan's twenty years as a crime reporter have given him a thief-and-cop mind? And finally: Has calling cops done away with thieves?

I said in my review that Mr. Sullivan's book "contains many surface facts about labor rackets which are important and challenging." But Mr. Sullivan, obviously, does not know—and possibly cannot ever know—that facts are not truth; that truth is something we must seek out from among the facts. . . .

LOUIS ADAMIC.

New York City.

Help for Rural Libraries

SIR:—I am wondering if you could call attention to the very great need for books to be given for the rural library projects. The NYA has no money for books and it has been necessary to obtain all our book collections from private gifts. Both the Literary Guild and the Book-of-the-Month Club have been very generous, particularly the Junior Literary Guild.

The need for more and better books increases as the service expands. I am sure that both individuals and organizations would be only too glad to help if they knew how great the need is.

FRANK L. TOLMAN.

State Education Department,
Library Extension Division,
Albany, N. Y.

Longfellow-Hawthorne Letters

SIR:—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana and Manning Hawthorne are preparing for publication the correspondence between their grandfathers, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Nathaniel Hawthorne. They would be extremely grateful for any original letters or information bearing on the subject. All material sent to this address will be carefully copied and promptly returned.

MURDOCH HOWELL & BARROWS,
100 Fifth Ave., *Publishers.*
New York City.

"Mainland"

SIR:—Will the reviewer of "Mainland" kindly supply a brief definition of "democratic collectivism," and indicate just how and wherein it is characteristic of the Middle West? Also, may we not suppose that some of the targets of Mr. Seldes's broadside were occasionally right about something?

CARINE FOX.

Rochester, N. Y.

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Adventurous Young Women

LADIES OF THE PRESS. The Story of Women in Journalism by an Insider. By Ishbel Ross. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1936. $3.75.

Reviewed by MARY LEE

THIS book is a collection of some two or three hundred biographical sketches of newspaper women, a collection which forms a valuable record of the part played by women in journalism in the United States. From Anne Royall, who sat on the clothes of President John Quincy Adams while he bathed in the Potomac, refusing to budge until he had answered her questions, and Nelly Bly who circled the globe for the *New York World* in 1889, through Imogene Stanley, who danced with the Prince of Wales for the *Daily News* in 1923 and Sonia Tomara, who handled the Ethiopian crisis from Rome for the *Herald Tribune* —practically every woman who has ever worked for a newspaper in the United States is there. It is an amusing story of that army of adventurous young women who come to New York, ninety-nine per-cent of them from the more provincial districts, land a job by either luck or skill, and stay to know New York a thousand times better than any New Yorker could possibly know it.

This is a book written in the style and after the manner of the daily newspaper rather than after the manner of the student or the historian. Ishbel Ross, for fourteen years a member of the staff of the *New York Herald Tribune,* covered many a big story from the Hall-Mills case through the Lindbergh kidnapping. She is a person who "knows her stuff" and in this book she has done her stuff pre-ëminently well.

The book is a vast collection of anecdotes, a mass of historical sources hastily thrown together rather than a coherent historical picture. The result is a certain tedium of effect, because like the kernels of corn in a popper each girl bobs up with liveliness and wit, yet in the last analysis each is more or less like the last. This is, perhaps, inevitable because, as Miss Ross shows ably in her first chapter, it takes a certain sort of woman to become a successful journalist.

> The woman reporter [she says] must face harsh facts without any qualms. She must be ready for such hazards as may befall her; . . . endure fatigue and disappointment beyond reason; withstand rebuffs . . . meet abuse with equanimity born of self control. . . .

Miss Ross might have added that she must get down to the office a half hour ahead of the men reporters—even if that be at seven a.m.—and stay a half hour after they leave at night, and come back from lunch after twenty minutes while they are taking an hour and a half. The city editor, when he looks round for someone to cover a big story that has broken at the wrong time, must see her sitting ready, but not idle.

The average reader will no doubt lay down "Ladies of the Press" with a sense of fatigue. How can any woman choose such a profession? How can she want to rush from one end of a great city to the other two or three times a day, always under an intense physical and mental strain? Why does she do it? To the old newspaper hand, however, the book awakens a strange nostalgia. One aches to feel just once again the messy informality of a city room, the green eye shades, the rolled up sleeves, the clap of twenty typewriters, the click of tickers, the hiss of chutes, the yells of "Copy!", the tense excitement of the City Editor when big news breaks.

Mary Lee was for several years on the staff of the New York Evening Post *where she covered assignments ranging from social functions to political and economic events.*

Disraeli

ISHBEL ROSS AND HER HUSBAND, BRUCE RAE

Mr. Rae is night city editor of the New York Times. *They met when they were covering the Stillman case.*

Kay Boyle's Sketch of a Likable Nazi

DEATH OF A MAN. By Kay Boyle. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

KAY BOYLE is always brilliant. Her snow scenes in this novel are sharper and much more interesting than the picture on the dust cover. Yet, one feels that she has got a little out of her depth. Her purpose seems to be to bring together two national types—and then see what happens. Her Austrian doctor is an admirable servant of society, worshipped by his hospital, loved by children, whose inner life has become a flame of undiscriminating loyalty to the Führer over the border. On that altar he is gladly laying down his career. Her American girl is a discontented waster, spoiled in youth; objectless in the present, but shrewd and realistic. They fall in love in high altitudes. They carry out dangerous missions on skiis in the mountain night. They sleep together in his hospital room, and turn the love of his devotees to rancour. His partisans beg her to let him alone for the sake of the cause. She tries but cannot. He tries to give her up, but fails. In the end he is proscribed, and whether they meet again depends upon the reader's guess.

It is an old theme, but a good one for this moment, when Europe is so inflamed with a new passion to obey, and America so dissatisfied with drifting. But it is a theme which used for current problems requires an unusual scope, a nicety of analysis, and a completeness of definition which Kay Boyle's rather impressionistic method does not serve. One feels her acuteness, one feels that the Tyrolean beer girls, and innkeepers, the nuns and children, the lonely hut keepers, are all factors in building up the psychology of a distressed nation. And on the other side, there is much that is typical of the American rich in the girl Pendennis's broken life, with its morbid sexual repressions, and its violent reactions against its own freedom to wreck or to raise. Much typical of the American, also, in the girl's sharp retort to the Nazi faith:— "Climbing the mountain they tell you to do, believing what they tell you just as it's told you, how can you go on swallowing it?" But in spite of a good Austrian background, and in spite of Kay Boyle's pungent dialogue, and in spite of her real contribution of a believable and likable Nazi, it is all incomplete, unconnected, impressionistic, partial. The reader swings from the love theme to the nation theme and back again, uncertain which to pin his interest to, and losing grip on both. This book would have made a marvellous short story. As a novel, one can call it only a sketch for a picture. It seems outside the range of Miss Boyle's powers.

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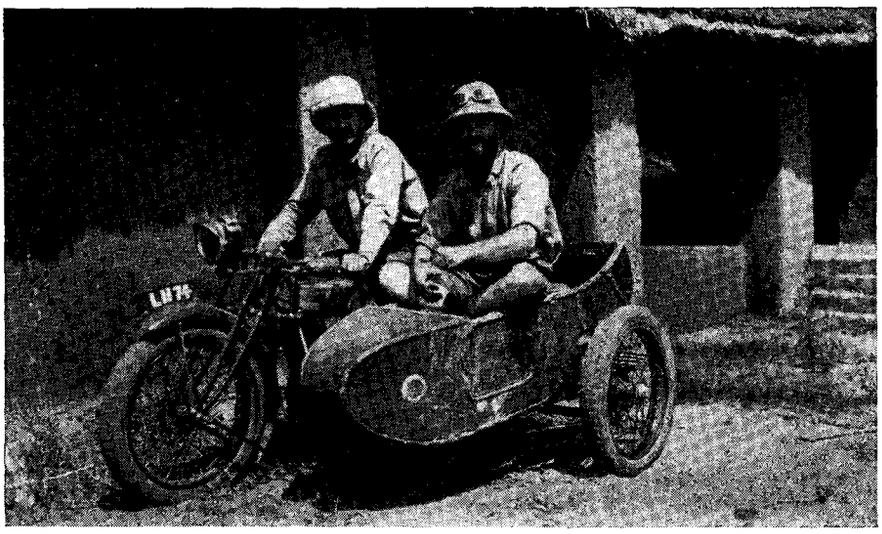

THREE-WHEELING THROUGH AFRICA: *Francis Flood and James C. Wilson.*

Crossing Africa on a Motorcycle

THREE-WHEELING THROUGH AFRICA. By James C. Wilson. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1936. $3.50.

Reviewed by JULIAN W. FEISS

WERE a friend to approach you and state that he was planning a trip across Africa, undoubtedly you would be interested. Were he to state that he was planning to traverse it from west to east via the southern Sahara you would probably become slightly worried. Then if he were to state that his equipment would consist of a movie camera and a banjo you would unquestionably make a dash for the nearest brain specialist. Yet this is exactly the journey and the equipment used by Mr. Wilson and Mr. Flood in their crossing of the Dark Continent.

Landing at Lagos in Nigeria the Flood-Wilson Trans-African Motorcycle Expedition traversed the jungle hinterlands of Nigeria through the steaming fever tangles to the borders of French West Africa. Heading eastward across the country of the Tauregs and the arid desert north of Lake Chad, after many adventures they succeeded in reaching the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and eventually the Red Sea by way of Eritrea. Once they were lost in the maze of sand dunes north of Lake Chad and, wandering about nearly out of petrol, almost died of thirst. They reached little desert outposts under control of the French Army and at one found gasolene priced at $4 a gallon.

Were Heinrich Barth alive today he would probably consider the entire tale as one of fiction. Three quarters of a century have made great differences in travel through the country first traversed by the old explorer but essentially the roads and caravan routes are the same. The roads are merely "projected" and the caravan routes are mere tracks in the sand.

It is a tribute to modern mechanics that both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Flood are alive today. Also it is a tribute to their own intelligence for all the ingenuity of a dozen motor mechanics plus the facilities of a modern machine shop would be required to enable the average man to make a similar trip. "Three-Wheeling Through Africa" is a most amusing and entertaining narrative. The book is profusely illustrated and the story does not drag. There are no scientific discussions and no pretensions regarding "exploration." It is a pity that more books on travel are not written in this spirit and it is pleasant to see that both Mr. Wilson and Mr. Flood had genuine regard for the natives who helped them along the road to the Red Sea.

Julian Feiss is a mining engineer and geologist who has spent much time in Africa in pursuit of his profession.

Many Andersons

KIT BRANDON: A PORTRAIT. By Sherwood Anderson. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by HOWARD MUMFORD JONES

ACCORDING to Mrs. Malaprop, Cerberus was a literary gentleman with three heads. "Kit Brandon" may be described as a book by three novelists: Sherwood Anderson I, Sherwood Anderson II, and Sherwood Anderson III. Sherwood Anderson I took charge of the first third of the fable, which, in the familiar Andersonian vein—that is to say, by apparently random revelations of the character's personality—gives a vivid impression of the heroine. Sherwood Anderson I then handed the typewriter over to Sherwood Anderson II, the indignant reformer determined to fight all over again the battle of the textile mill worker in the South. Sherwood Anderson II introduced Agnes, a huge and masculine lady, but he allowed Sherwood Anderson I to play about with a character whose eccentricity it is to gallop through the moonlit meadows on all fours like a horse. Finally Sherwood Anderson III appeared, and finished the volume. Barring cuss words, this portion of the story might appear in the chaste pages of *Collier's* or *The Saturday Evening Post*. Its principal personage is Kit Brandon the Queen of the Rum Runners (all this was before Roosevelt), who, after various hairbreadth escapes, murders, gangster meetings, and other Hollywood items, resolves to chuck it all and Go Straight. During the last one hundred pages the reader is tempted to look back at the title-page to discover whether he hasn't picked up the wrong book.

That there are several personalities tucked away in the owner of *The Marion Democrat* has long been known, but the heterogeneity of the authors of "Kit Brandon" springs, not only from a profound disharmony in Sherwood Anderson, but also from a profound disharmony of artistic methods. Anderson the amoral psychologist, curious about people, approaches his problem of interpretation from the inside; that is to say, he tries for a time to become the person he is presenting; and since all persons are amazingly interesting from the inside, the problem of social injustice is, in a sense, irrelevant. But Anderson the reformer is an observant sociologist; he looks upon the behavior of people in social patterns from the outside. He sees, for example, that southern mill-workers are poorly housed and badly paid; and, in his indignation, he abandons the method of Anderson I to indict the social system. And finally there is the fiction-writer finishing off his book—Anderson III, whose main purpose is to get the story done. Perhaps both the psychologist and the reformer wanted a vacation. They got it.

I am tempted to add a footnote on swearing. The characters in "Kit Brandon" go in for profanity, and very feeble profanity it is. Damn, God damn, and hell have been long accepted in polite circles; and our more advanced publishing houses are now referring typographically to the male descendant of a female canine. The result does not improve literary art. Unless authors can invent some better way of indicating the bawdy or profane moments of the lives of their characters, it is difficult to see what the new liberty has accomplished. One receives a richer esthetic experience from Mark Twain's description of the more lyric moments in the life of a Mississippi River pilot—a description conspicuously lacking in four-letter words—than one does from the literal phrases of Miss Brandon's friends.

But I was supposed to be reviewing Sherwood Anderson. "Kit Brandon" is a highly readable novel, but I still prefer "Tar."

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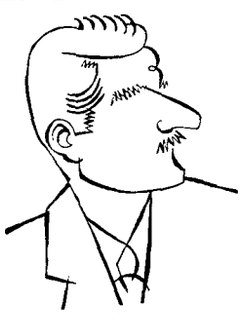
A Letter to the Editor

BY ROBERT HILLYER

TIME brings us, Benny, to our middle years,
Not unattuned to life or over careers.
In tasks that after war seemed merely play,
We hastened to make up for war's delay.
Youth, overstimulated by reverses,
Wrings blessings, sometimes, from expected curses,
As medieval necromancers bent them
And flung them back against the ones who sent them.
My memory works strangely like a sieve,
I drop the bad, the happy I relive;
A fatal disposition for today,
When memories should work the other way.
Thus, if I think of war, my backward glance
Shows me Dos Passos in a frenzied dance,
Unwonted ecstasy upon his face
As shrapnel tears his raincoat into lace;—
He was not in the coat,—had that been true,
Three soldiers would have been reduced to two.
Good luck, in so unheralded a stroke,
By incongruity becomes a joke,
Something to dance to, though great nations ebb
And Burberrys are raveled to a web.

But why do shell-shocked veterans increase
Among the children of unbroken peace,
Whose pocketbooks are lined with golden fleece?
When our hope faltered, discipline achieved
Through will what hope would never have believed.
How much less fortunate a generation
Where doubt is dogma, faith a speculation.
Almost I'd choose the boredom and the wrath
Of war to war's neurotic aftermath.
Do not misread me, I would not prescribe
An evil that demands a diatribe,
But why should so much poetry and fiction
Be Pollyanna in reverse direction,—
Alike by sentimentalism fired,
She wafted skyward, they completely mired.
False hope or false despair, a bogus passion,
Dependent on the maunderings of fashion.



Faulkner: Caricature by Arthur Hawkins, Jr.

Art is so long and human life so short,—
In hurried years young novelists resort
To sweet publicity, that freely offers
Headlines to vanity and cheques to coffers.
They snatch at tribute due a deathless name,
The fruits, without the patient growth, of fame;
Like millionaires, impatient of slow Nature,
Who transplant trees grown to their fullest stature,
Till bankruptcy and weather overwhelm
Both pocketbook and unancestral elm.
As fast as pen can trot, young writers build
Volumes, compact of words, but unfulfilled;
The sound and fury so intense, that often
The Muse's corpse is jostled from her coffin,
Where she lay dying in a rattling hearse
Driven by Faulkner, Wolfe, and even worse.
When tragedy descends from court to hovel
Fit men make no fit subject for a novel,
But only monsters whose creators, even,
Confuse them, and John reappears as Stephen—
A trifling slip, no doubt, it yet suffices
To limit the consistency to vices;
Except that one must ponder if the style
Or matter is consistently more vile.
They look not to the distant mountains. Death
Is in their eyes and madness in their breath.
Around, in never-lifting vapors curled
Lie all the fetid miseries of the world;
While, as through city snow, on muffled feet
The baffled spirits move in long retreat,
Passing, repassing; slantwise through the haze
Their bloodshot eyes in dying sockets glaze.
If one were recognizable as man
We'd tremble, as perhaps their authors can,
But Ariel's as true as Caliban.

Add to these self-tormented symbolists,
Seas of red ink, savannas of clenched fists:
The propagandist boys, who boys remain
Though fifty acid years corrode the drain,
Their hero, Marx; their laureate, Hart Crane.
A combination one might find emetic
Of impure politics and false esthetic,
But for the common bond of failure; this
Being the pass to apotheosis.
With what assurance our eccentric neighbor
Ascribes to luck what we have won with labor,
He cut his coupons, while we earned our bread;
Our day of work half done, he rose from bed
To vent his spite against a social order
That welcomed him as guest, and me as boarder.
To such, all work is tyranny, encrusted
With complications for the maladjusted,
For from whatever quarter blows the wind,
It stings the nose of the undisciplined.

Dos Passos: Caricature by Eva Herrmann.

Perhaps the social order should be ended,
But wherein has the English tongue offended?
The proletarians must think it has
Some vague connection with Czar Nicholas.
Good syntax and the niceties of style
Like weary kulaks wander in exile;
Harvests of English usage are laid waste
By vast coöperatives of bad taste,
Averse to discipline in any field,
They talk, we heed; they write, they are revealed.
Let phrases keener than these couplets smite them,
They cannot answer, for they cannot write them.

O if Rome had one neck! and I a sword!
Cried Rome's exasperated overlord;
We view the literary mobs, and ah
Who would not echo wise Caligula?
Is there no city where they meet, or rather
Some single room where all the schools foregather?
The Communist, the psychoanalytic,
The esthete, and the deputated critic?
Of course there is! A gross expatriate
Had condescended to a lecture date,—
Her bank account commanding,—and she sits
Enthroned at cocktail parties in the Ritz;
A mammoth idol round whose granite flanks
The writers gyrate in unsteady ranks.

There by the wall a maiden poet stands,
Her gestures undulant on languid hands;
Each finger nail a crimson petal, seen
Through a pale garnishing of nicotine.
Her draperies, like downward vapor, tremble,
As one by one her courtiers assemble.
Her wistful eyes, now gazing far, report
Her rival's shoulder strap and smaller court.
She smiles,—it is the same ecstatic smile
That graced the sacred cats along the Nile.
Now budding authors flutter to full bloom,
Spying an editor across the room.
Some strike an attitude, and some advance
In Marathons if not in Pyrrhic dance.

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As in Ravel's familiar piece, crescendos
Pound till they shake the glass in all the windows,
So, like the drums, the rhythmic cocktails urge
Fortissimos to even fiercer surge;
Voice mounting voice until amid the riot
Stravinsky's Rites of Spring would seem too quiet.
A novelist, whose enviable position
Explains, but does not warrant, his condition,
Reiterantly through the medley yelps:
"You'll sell ten thousand if you're praised by Phelps!"
A statement we must doubt, until we hear
That thirty billion books are sold a year.

But silence! Like the weary horn that wound
Through Roncevaux its melancholy sound,
When the dull evening fell, and Roland, dying,
Heard from the crags only the echoes crying,
And Nature, pitiful for once, was still
In sudden hush upon the darkening hill,—
Silence! the Columnist is on the sill!
An ample Muse, she pauses for effect,
With sequins and synthetic pearls bedecked.
Upon her shoulder ferns and one white lily
Recall the Venus in a Botticelli;—
Not sea-born Venus, but that later era,
The pregnant Venus of the Primavera.
She enters with triumphant condescension
Exuding promises of Sunday mention.
Impishly coy, grandiloquent with power,
She bids await the inevitable hour
When printer's ink shall scatter her largesse
On writers who have won their own success.
Camp-follower of literature, acclaimed
By all the nameless longing to be named,
She is our hope, our symbol! And is this
The end of literature? I fear it is.
That flaccid neck is all we hate of Rome,—
Your sword, Caligula. My lord, strike home!

Well, Benny, if 'twere said, 'twere better said;
My pen grows dull; besides, the wench is dead.
I sit an exile now, in far Vermont
Scolding of this and that as is my wont.
Have not New Englanders sufficient taste
Of winter that in summer months they waste
Their August chance of basking like a lizard
By traveling north to meet an August blizzard?
You, as Vermonter, find these lines effete,
But I am homesick for a touch of heat.
Yet think me not a malcontent, I bask
In sunlight strong as anyone could ask:
The warmth of eager minds, the affluent reach
Of those who learn far better than I teach.
Here in this amiable school one finds
That the ambition of most human minds
When balanced normally, is to bespeak
Not chaos but a pattern for technique;
And widening my gaze, I guess that man
Provided with a plan would fill the plan.

In this unhurried universe, how clear
The metred stars ascending, tier on tier,
Wake amid muted chaos, sounds that change
To light in that immeasurable range,
While through the answering valleys, spark on spark,
The lamps of men order their little dark.
From unseen atoms to blind space beyond
All in unbroken balance correspond.
Drive chaos back! Unutterably conveyed,
That theme is life, and that must be obeyed;
Though meteors break loose, and self-expression
Affords indulgent chances for confession.
All things but chaos balance in design,
Planets in orbit, words in written line;
Yet chaos, mirrored in unruly hearts,
Though shunned in heaven, shadows earthly arts.
Let passion clamor, reason still refers
For evidence to atoms and the stars.

Well, Sir, without intent I seem to be
Your mentor in a new astrology.
Be Sagittarius, whose keen-eyed arrows
Fly deftly past the swans and hit the sparrows.
You'll be beslavered and you'll be accused,
Praised to your face, behind your back, abused;
The smiler with the knife beneath his candy
Will have his cards of introduction handy.
But happily you know. Ah, good my friend,
Bid common sense return and nonsense end.

"A Letter to the Editor" is one of six satires in heroic couplets by the winner of the Pulitzer prize for poetry in 1934. The first, "A Letter to Robert Frost," appeared in The Atlantic Monthly.

Evolution of a Benedick

THE BAD PARENT'S GARDEN OF VERSE. By Ogden Nash. Illustrated by Reginald Birch. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1936. $2.

Reviewed by PHYLLIS MCGINLEY

Drawings by Reginald Birch.

IN those unthinkable days of yore
When Ogden Nash was a bachelor,
He wrote no rhymes and he found no reason
To hymn the results of the mating season.
In cynical stanzas he used to scoff Spring
And slander scions and sneer at offspring,
Boast how a crib won only dismay from him,
And plead with the stork to keep away from him.
Yes, wry were the themes that he used to rhyme on
For Mister Schuster and Mister Simon.

But look what happens to attitudes lyrical!
Then came the deluge, then the miracle.
Before you could say, "I bet you daren't,"
Ogden Nash had become a parent.
Indeed, undaunted by teething trouble,
He went and became a parent, double.

How the bells rang out with joy and elation,
How word went flashing across the nation,
How news spread foreign and news spread local!
For any parent is pretty vocal,
But where is the man wouldn't crow aloud,
With daughters and copy at once endowed?

So now he sings more gay than he uster
For Mr. Simon and Mr. Schuster,
And strings his harp as a father should
To praise the pleasures of parenthood.

Hurrah, Mr. Nash, for your writings laughable!
We liked you surly, we love you affable,
And think your poems designed for the nursery
Almost the best in your bulging versery.
(There's one, especially, you might brag on,
Concerning Belinda who owned a dragon;
We also discovered ourselves in stitches
Over the lady who ate up witches.)

And, fine, Mr. Nash! you're not so silly as
Many another Pater Familias,
For you see flaws as well as perfection
In little gazelles of your own selection.
And we like your remarks on tending and feeding them;
And, thank God, most the poems in this book *scan*, and aren't made up of the kind of lines that used to be funny but now we get eyestrain from reading them.
And since that's a thing that we're filled with delight about,
We're glad that you had some daughters to write about.

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Books of the Fall

Advance reports on the season's important books, submitted by

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY, CHRISTOPHER MORLEY, WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

Of the Book-of-the-Month Club Selection Committee

Rather than publish a complete list of Fall books, which after all is only a book list and can seldom help any one to make his choice, The Saturday Review *offers informal opinions by three of the judges of the Book-of-the-Month Club. In their official capacity they have read most of the principal books already published this season or to appear within the next two months. Their opinions as expressed herein make a useful and highly selective guide to Fall reading. In their reports, the titles not yet published have been marked with an asterisk.—The Editors.*

Mr. White:

MY impression of the books that have come across my desk for the year 1936, as reader for the Book-of-the-Month, is that on the whole those books were not so interesting as the books of the year before. Possibly the letdown was in my attention. But these books of '36, with one or two exceptions, seem to me to lack a certain distinction. In the lot was one super-best seller, "Gone with the Wind." I picked it as my first choice for the Book-of-the-Month because obviously it would be a best seller. It seemed obviously "a wrap-up," a thing sold in advance and a customer made happy. My own choice that month, the month that "Gone with the Wind" came along, would have been a book like Joseph Jastrow's "Story of Human Error."* If I were picking my favorite book, that type of book, which is not generally a best seller, would be chosen as the Book-of-the-Month club prize too often. It's just as well that we have on our reading committee several minds with varied tastes. I suppose the book that I liked better than any of the half a hundred I have read this year was Stuart Chase's "Rich Land, Poor Land," a vital book, a terrible book which should be made compulsory reading in every high school and college in this land, yet one which alas will have a limited sale and fall into the hands of men and women who agree with it in advance. "Who Owns America," edited by Herbert Agar and Allen Tate, was another book of much the same kind that pleased me. It was written by apostles of discontent. These Jeremiads—and, in the list of books I read this year, "American Democracy and the World War" was another, and "Pacific Adventure" by Willard Price was not such a hopeful story—seem to me to be the best medicine for our current ills of the flesh. Complacency in this hour for the American is a soporific, the opium administered to democracy in danger.

In my list, however, were a number of corking good stories, "Drums Along the Mohawk," for instance, by Walter Edmonds. It reminded me of a book of adventure published in the 1870's called "Our Western Border One Hundred Years Ago," one which my father bought of a subscription book agent and which filled my young days with delight and my dreams with pleasant horrors. This "Drums Along the Mohawk" story, a story of cruel fighting Indians, was the sort of thing that my generation was reared on, strong pap, probably about as bad as the gangster movies today, yet we survived. But perhaps we might have been much better if we'd been properly led away to the Elsie books; I don't know.

I enjoyed "The Brothers Ashkenazi," but it was not a book for the center table. It was an honest, serious discussion of one of the major problems of modern Europe in fiction form, as Maurice Hindus's "Moscow Skies" was a fictional travelogue in the Russia of 1933 and '34,—a true picture apparently and one that a reader who desires to know about Russia should read. He should also realize that events are moving so fast in the Soviet world that "Moscow Skies" is practically a historical novel. Probably it is out of step with the world this minute. Herbert Gorman, who always writes a good story whether biography or fiction, did a splendid job with "The Mountain and the Plain." His research is always careful, his picture authentic even if his story sometimes gets a little melodramatic. But the French Revolution was melodramatic and probably Mr. Gorman's fiction was on the safe side of truth. Anyway, it was a pleasant book.

Two other pleasant and enjoyable books were Donald Culross Peattie's "Green Laurels" and Malvina Hoffman's "Heads and Tales." I liked Joseph Dineen's forthcoming "Ward Eight"* but it was too good a movie scenario to be the novel it might have been. If they do that faithfully on the screen, I shall go to see it and take my friends. It will make a beautiful, significant, disturbing picture of American urban political life. "African Witch," by Joyce Cary, is a grand tale. It will have to go to the screen to get its best interpretation. There indeed would be a super travelogue which has not been equaled in the movies since "Trader Horn" went down the road.

The books I liked least in the year's list were probably the best books submitted, "Green Margins," by E. P. O'Donnell, and William Faulkner's shortly to be published "Absalom, Absalom."* "Green Margins" is a succession of dirty stories about dirty people, beautifully told. In my youth, having lived in a country town familiar with the venery of the hayloft, the hay stack, the livery stable, and the old-fashioned saloon, with the Rabelaisian rhymes of the boys at the swimming hole still jingling in my memory, I don't seem to need a revival of that sort of plaisance in my declining years. It doesn't revolt me. Heaven knows, nothing ever can shock me, with the fond recollections of my innocent childhood hovering like lascivious ghosts through the secret places of my heart. But Lord, I'm like old Solomon who cried out, "Comfort me with apples and stay me with flagons, for I am sick of love," certainly sick of having that kind of love smeared under my nose as literature. It is *Ersatz*. And I don't seem to need compensations.

As to William Faulkner's book, I've tried and tried to surrender myself to the obvious gentleness of his personality, to his tender heart, to the warmth that glows through whatever he writes, the warmth of a genuinely human person. But one must burrow through pages of detached uprooted ideas, like a pig hunting truffles, to get what he is driving at. And why do it? And here is a pointer—in the 80's and 90's, Henry James and Meredith wrote that kind of involved, obscure, literary crossword puzzle stuff—shelves full of it.

I spent some days of my youth and not a few nights digging into it and thinking I was dumb because I rejected it. Men said, "Here's the style of the future; here's beautiful English; here's a literary consummation of the hopes of the doctrinaires of a new art." Well, where is the new art now? Is anyone excited about "Richard Feverel," a fine novel, by the way, or "The Golden Bowl?" They also and all their kind are "gone with the wind."

Someone would be doing William Faulkner a kindness to make an interlinear translation of "Absalom, Absalom" in plain, straightforward, Sunday supplement newspaper English. He has doubtless told a good story, but after reading it "through long nights of labor and days devoid of ease" I don't seem to get the hang of it. However I am charmed and warmed by something back of those baffling lines that must come out of the

(*Continued on page* 26)

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

Reperusal

I WAS a little grieved—with the petulance of the egotist, I suppose—when I read as follows in Herbert West's pleasant *Modern Book Collecting for the Impecunious Amateur:*—

"I suspect a good many readers first discovered Mr. Logan Pearsall Smith in 1933 when he published his *On Reading Shakespeare.*"

This seemed less than fair to the *Trivia* zealots who have been by no means lacking ever since that little vinaigrette classic was first published for general circulation in 1917. It cast a shadow on the Green which has for so many years belabored its customers with petition and advice in re Mr. Pearsall Smith. And in looking up the bibliography of L. P. S., Mr. West will even find that some of the sketches included in the volume *More Trivia* (1922) were first printed in a newspaper column in Philadelphia.

I enjoyed Mr. West's book, which is written in a lively and positive spirit and with the good purpose of inoculating the small-pursed collector. He is brisk and sensible on the matter of signed and limited editions and all sorts of phony de luxes. He starts various hares of anecdote or controversy which I should enjoy to help him pursue. In some cases the hare might escape while we were bickering for I don't always agree with him. For instance I don't think *Goodbye Mr. Chips* "extraordinary." The ship *Erin's Isle,* in which William McFee was almost born, was not a "schooner" but a square-rigger. My impression is that Swinburne and Watts-Dunton used to walk together not in the "north" of London but in the southwest (Putney Heath). Some of Mr. West's biographical allusions are rather sketchy—for instance in the case of the distinguished Bone family. These matters are important enough to require a background of sure fact.

These cavils are mentionable, in a mood of fraternal backchat, because Mr. West's book is of a good sort and on the right track. Naturally it pleases me that we have many favorites in common. When he talks of Neil Munro (though he several times calls him "Hugh" Munro), Mary Webb, James Elroy Flecker, Wilfrid Blunt, Sir Hugh Clifford, Roy Campbell and various others, I swing my hat. I wish he had spoken more at large about the divine Stella Benson. He says he has had Tomlinson's *The Sea and the Jungle,* first edition, offered him for as low as five guineas. Dare I prickle him by confiding that I bought my copy (in 1920) from the State Library of Harrisburg, Pa., for One Dollar? They were glad to dispose of it then as unread and unwanted.

Had we but world enough, and time, Mr. West and I could find plenty to metabolize together. The grand old *Caronia,* for instance: he says he crossed in her in '24. Does he remember the expansion joint, a sort of flexible fissure (or suture) that ran right across her middle? But he was reading Conrad's *Rover* that voyage and I have a feeling that he didn't admire *Caronia* as she deserved. Does he remember the big fireplace in the smokeroom; the whiteheaded old Night Steward who brought around sandwiches and coffee in the middle watch; and the cranks in the engine-room—I mean mechanical cranks, those noble big connecting rods, the largest ever cast they used to tell us. O lyric love, half piston and half crank, I used to cry. . . . What a ship! She even

L. P. S., AGED FOUR

had a book dedicated to her, if only a little one.

I could even argue with Mr. West about the frontispiece of his book, "A Corner of the Author's Library." I'm a bit worried about it, I don't think a library should look quite so prim. . . . That sounds unmannerly, but Mr. West will understand. Collectors are jot-hounds and tittle-baiters. What would look among others like picking a quarrel is really the flush of kinspiracy. Bibliophiles of the right kidney are sea-lawyers and quidnuncs; in the delirium of their mystery their eyes roll together in a comical insane gleam—like a dog's when he shakes his head. Not without reason is Crotchet Castle their home and Crabbe one of their poets.

The very day after reading Mr. West's book, and thinking to myself that I had been a Pearsall Smith devotee for exactly a quarter of a century—it was in 1911 that I found a pleasantly faded copy of *The Youth of Parnassus* in an Oxford bookshop; in the words of Lord Houghton's pretty poem

> This was not the work of days
> But had gone on for years and years—

I happened into one of those intelligent bookshops where like narrow estuaries the tide rises faster and sooner than on the broad sandy shores of trade. There I saw Pearsall Smith's new book, *Reperusals and Re-Collections,* already published in London but not yet (to my knowledge, at least) announced over here. Mr. Smith speaks therein of Edward FitzGerald as the master of the art of reperusal, the exquisite and refreshing renewal of old enthusiasms. In this elderly and savoring spirit, both ripe and acrid, Pearsall Smith at seventy has put together some of his enduring amours of print. And for the whole of one felicitously rainy day I rolled his fine flavors on my tongue. I sat or sprawled by an open fire (my curst Italian stonemason made the fireplace opening so low that to enjoy the blaze one has to squat on the floor; and perhaps that affords a literary parable) or occasionally rambled into the wet garden to rummage my own memories with those of this beloved old bachelor whom I always think of as the ideal intellectual uncle. Alert ironist, patient precisian of words, still endearingly young in so many moods, what finer uncle or godfather could there be for any sensitive prose mind. (O. W. Firkins was another, in his own way. Perhaps only England or the Middle West, both somewhat exempt from the muddy sophistries and yowling self-conscious bravado of the Atlantic coast, could stimulate so clear a mood.) In the very first paragraph of this new book I found a happy and humorous apologia for my own feelings about Pearsall Smith:—

> There are readers—and I am one of them—whose reading is rather like a series of intoxications. We fall in love with a book; it is our book, we feel, for life; we shall not need another. We cram-throat our friends with it in the cruellest fashion; make it a Gospel, which we preach in a spirit of propaganda and indignation, putting a woe on the world for a neglect of which last week we were equally guilty.

And so, in his own spirit of possessed excitement, I lived through Pearsall Smith's professions of faith. Montaigne, Madame de Sévigné, John Donne, Jeremy Taylor, Jane Austen, Carlyle—had I not also—no matter how transiently—sat under all those pulpits too (very likely

(*Continued on page* 20)

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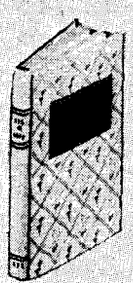
October Book-of-the-Month and Fellowship

Green



In Pursuit of Laughter

AGNES REPPLIER

"People who like Agnes Repplier's essays will love this grand new collection, beautifully written, and with a wealth of funny stories and sayings in it, thick-sown as plums in a Christmas pudding."—*Dorothy Canfield Fisher.* $2.75

The River is broad and majestic; its aspect constantly changing. The land is thin and hollow. Islands float about. Hurricane waves roar over the levees. Fiddler crabs prowl the roads. Jack o'lanterns dance in the night. Flocks of pelicans sail by with a dreadful roaring. Brawny women skin mink and otter in the marshes. Men wrestle alligators hand to claw.

This is the scene of "Green Margins," a tale of living

Other *new books* you will want to read

Jefferson in Power

CLAUDE G. BOWERS

"It recreates and gives significance to the flesh-and-blood passions of Jefferson's day."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune. Illus.* $3.75

Victoria of England

EDITH SITWELL

"More compact and faster moving than Strachey. Presents a clearer picture of the Victorian background." *Heywood Broun. Illus.* $3.50

Pre-War Years 1913-1917

FREDERIC L. PAXSON

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The Bowling Green

(Continued from page 17)

by nephew's contagion) and then, by merciful lack of memory, saved myself from too frantic a zeal. Enchanted by all but yield wholly to none is the only remedy in this parish.

There's a very odd remark in *Everyman's Encyclopedia* in the article on THE ESSAY. It sounds like nonsense, yet perhaps considerable. The Essay, says Everyman, "should treat of life in general, and not of any specialised subject." The pleasure to me of Pearsall Smith's literary papers is in their radiance of suggestion. Centrifugal, they spin the reader on tangents of his own. Madame de Sévigné for instance (I spent an hour hunting in vain for my little volume of selected letters) —I could not think of her without remembering a Burgundian chateau where I spent loitering days of summer's end. The touch and smell of old timber and tapestries, the color of candle-light, sputter of French bundled faggots, damp and cobwebs of the wine cellar, sunlight in linden alleys, the magic sadness of an old old house, all came back upon me and I remembered, that actually, only a few miles away, some of Madame's own letters—smelling I suppose of saddle-leather —arrived by post at Bussy-Rabutin. Rain pattered on the roof, through a narrow window I could see the green and yellow leafage shining wet, Muggins the Scot tried to crowd close on the fireside blanket. What short legs he has, I thought, to travel so big a world . . . is it not even so in the realms of reading? The chimney smelt damp, just like the stone tower-room at Missery; and here too on the rafters I have cobwebs of my own.

Uncle Pearsall will never have a better reader than he had that day. Not by any means a slavish one: I did not scruple to chivvy a bit here and there. I was not pleased at his allowing his printer to misspell the name of Emily Dickinson (who is as dear to me as Madame de Sévigné) and I thought his anglicization of *timbre* into *tamber* ugly and unnecessary. I noticed that he is overfond of the adjective *formidable* and I was amused that he is still touting for his coinage *milver* ("to describe those who share a fad in common"). This fabricated word has no root to grow on, its only merit, he confesses, is as a rhyme for *silver*. I have long tried to persuade Uncle Pearsall to throw the great weight of his linguistic magistracy behind a much better coinage of my own, *kinsprit*.

Through the idle hours of a long dripping day, alternating between the oblivion of reading and the wealthy congestion of remembering (and some catnaps on the floor) I chameleoned the opals of Mr. Smith's mind. I shared his ecstasy in identifying the actual homestead of *Mansfield Park*, rejoiced in his rediscovery of the astonishing Maginn (look him up some time in the *Maclise Portrait Gallery* if you're curious) and walked with him through Sussex woods to gather "certain funguses which are delicious eating." Exactly so, these many years, Pearsall Smith has strolled the less frequented thickets of our literature and found that what many thought old fungus was edible delight. His long essay on the English Aphorists is perhaps the most irresistible piece in this volume. Here he counters the familiar notion that English is weak (compared to French, for instance) in the brief and epigrammatic reflection—*aperçu, pensée,* maxim, wisecrack, whatever you choose to call it. His tingling shrewdness of quotation serves him well here. He traces our masters in brevier from Bacon to Santayana (I think he might have come along to Mencken and Don Marquis, but Mr. Smith is pretty rusty in his American ligatures) with mischievous applause. As readers of his own *Afterthoughts* know, Mr. Smith himself has a touch of the iodine aphorist, though his epigrams smell just a trifle of the glass factory. But his contemplation of the aphorism at its best raises him to fine comment:—

> Like flashes of lightning they reveal the familiar world in a sudden, strange illumination; the accompanying din alarms us, till, from far ranges of experience, echoes return in long reverberations to confirm them.

So I thank Mr. West for putting me in the mood for such a day as one spends only with L. P. S. That evening when I went back to the house I began turning over some of my collection. Dearest of all, of course, the books I never saw, the mysterious *Golden Urn,* 3 volumes, Fiesole, 1897-98. I once saw them listed in Dulau's catalogue and this was the quote—surely the hand of Pearsall writing:—

> *A queer compilation on Art and Letters written, edited and published by* L. PEARSALL SMITH *and* B. BERENSON. . . . *privately printed, and will not be for sale. Copies, however, will be sent—not without a feeling, or at least an affectation of diffidence—to a few fastidious people.*

I was few and fastidious, but I didn't have the two guineas which was then the price.—I looked over the amusing little French translation of *Trivia* (Cahiers Verts, 1921) with its graceful preface by Valery Larbaud; I wondered again, as I have so often, what became of my copy of Frank Shay's reprint of *The Youth of Parnassus* which issued from the busy bookshop on Christopher Street back in the brave days of '21 (or thereabouts). Ah, Mr. West, the Pearsall Smith market was a lively one in those young times.

I took out *Songs and Sonnets,* in Elkin Mathews' funny little Vigo Cabinet Series, 1909. Pearsall Smith was then struggling (as we all) to find his own special way of saying things. "From thy fatal nib," he said to his pen,

> "have birth
> All the platitudes of earth."

And yet already, if he had realized it, issued privately in 300 copies only, some of the *Trivia* which were to delight the fastidious had been seven years in print. I turned over the yellowing edges of the cheap brittle paper used for the Vigo Cabinets. (They were only a shilling apiece.) Suddenly I found that in spite of previous affectionate recourse there were still two pages unopened. I almost hesitated to cut the fold. So many years those musting pages had stood inviolate, pressed closed together in the darkness of the shelf. What echo, from Pearsall Smith's past or my own, might be summoned by the unknown words?

I slit the edge (pages 28-29). A sonnet on Oxford—surely a happy circling of the wheel. It was the Oxford so many have seen, as you look down from low neighboring hills in a gray-blue dusking afternoon. By some queer slant of watery brightness towers and spires are for a moment luminously white. But returning through damp dark streets you wonder how came that vision—

> "Nor find the town that gleamed beneath the hill,
> The magic town that never can be ours."

It did not bother me in the least that this sonnet, mildly pretty, had in it one rhyme (hours-ours) strictly indefensible and all the others conventional stereo. I was glad to be taken back in thought to something very much my own and not subject to palaver. And I thought also of a boy who had just told me how he bicycled to Oxford this summer, for the first time; how he had dreamed of seeing it lying beautiful in the valley below him, but by some mischance came upon it only through the crowd and commerce of the ugly Cowley Road. So I ask Pearsall Smith if I have not been, for him, indeed the docible and perfect reader: for that boy, a spiritual grandnephew, is of the very era when L. P. S. was humorously urging Posterity "to hurry up and get itself born so it may have the pleasure of reading *Trivia.*" It seemed the completion of a three-dimensional scheme.

And, final bonus for my easyday, I discovered that this month L. P. S. will have his 71st festival. More readers than he imagines are glad that he broke away from the family glass-business and was modestly endowed to lead one of the happiest lives in a distracted age. A lot of us have had to see more of the Cowley Roads of life, and less of the shining and unreachable city. On those happy occasions when he shares with us his acute and endless reading we have a queer twinge. Literature, we know, is the words of men wrung from them by various passion and pain; but it rises to its most pleasing when it becomes something to be written about, long afterward, by Pearsall Smith.

How delightfully odd, and what good discipline for the Old Country, that the most perfect mandarin of English letters, the choicest master of her taste and (?) tamber, should have come from Philadelphia.

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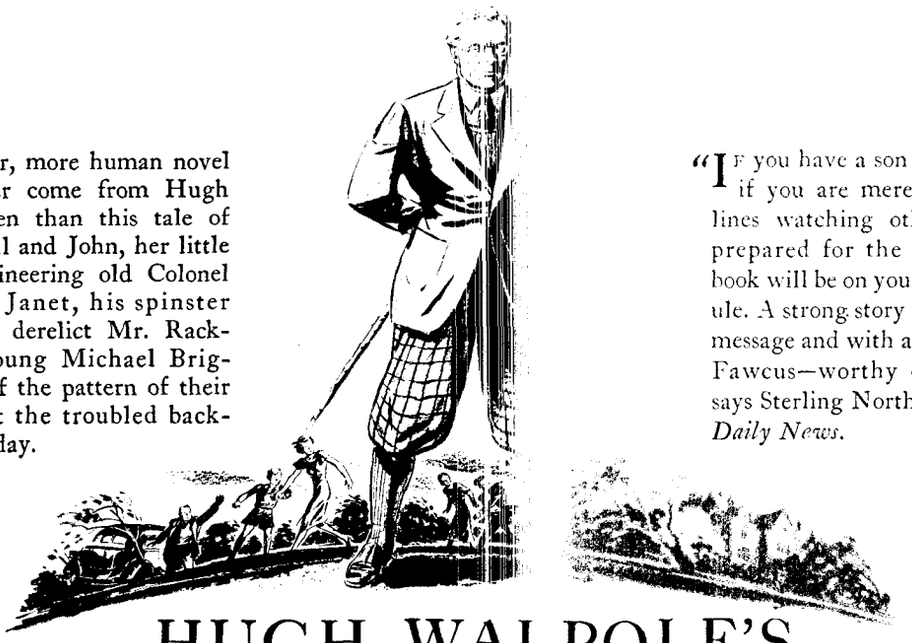
No warmer, more human novel has ever come from Hugh Walpole's pen than this tale of Rose Clennell and John, her little son, of domineering old Colonel Fawcus, of Janet, his spinster daughter, of derelict Mr. Rackstraw, of young Michael Brighouse, and of the pattern of their lives against the troubled background of today.



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Books Into Ballots

(*Continued from page 4*)

for the ailing body politic. Weyl was an economist with leftish leanings; that is, he had, for an economist, an inquiring mind which bore fruit in a book called "The New Democracy." He uttered, as John Chamberlain has pointed out, such scandalous doctrines as the "right to tax" being the "right to destroy." He urged government ownership of some industries and government control of all. Croly, however, received the greatest public recognition for his writings. A first edition of "The Promise of American Life" appeared in 1909 and attracted the attention, before long, of Theodore Roosevelt. The Rough Rider had emerged from the African jungle by 1910 and was wishing with bitterness that he had not promised not to run for a third term. According to Lippmann, who is now somewhat unhappily supporting Alfred M. Landon and explaining his course, from day to day, in the *New York Herald Tribune:* "Croly . . . made articulate for Roosevelt his aspiration to combine the social and political reforms initiated by Bryan and La-Follette with a Hamiltonian affection for a strong national government."

Herbert Croly supplied, at least, a very fine phrase for Theodore Roosevelt when he called for a "new nationalism." Lippmann, too, produced a book, "A Preface to Politics," which became a sort of secondary Bible to the boys and girls who were attending the nation's colleges and who were being poisoned by subversive professors into a suspicion that the Republican Party and the National Association of Manufacturers had not governed the nation with complete wisdom. All three of these books were important in that they influenced the political thinking of the day. Croly, Weyl, and Lippmann, by the fall of 1914, were editors of *The New Republic,* a magazine financed by Willard D. Straight who had read "The Promise of American Life" and been profoundly impressed by it.

It may be doubted, on the other hand, that the voters, themselves, are ever persuaded to vote for Candidate A or Candidate B by any book. Prior to the 1928 campaign I was persuaded by a firm of independent, and very young, publishers to write an impartial life of Alfred E. Smith. Whatever its faults, the book was honest. It portrayed Al's faults as well as his many virtues. It was, therefore, denounced by Republicans and Democrats alike. I recall a visit to Washington during the campaign. The manager of Brentano's bookshop had been persuaded to feature my biography in a window display. The show was spectacular, brilliant —a delight to the heart of any author. And I succumbed, as authors do, to dropping into the store and asking how the book was going.

"It's aroused a lot of interest," the manager told me. "On the first day it was in the window at least twelve members of Congress came in and asked whether they were entitled to complimentary copies. I think we've actually sold about ten since the display started."

The sad fact, obviously, is that Americans, whether they vote or not, do not often buy books. Their political views are formed by newspaper editorials, by speeches that they hear, by political rallies to which they listen over the radio. But this is not an implication that the muckrakers did not do valiant and important work or that Dr. Beard, Mr. Myers, Herbert Croly, and the rest sat at their desks in vain. It took time for their ideas to penetrate. Their influence was upon the leaders of the masses rather than upon the voters themselves. And the credit due them is not lessened by the fact that years, if not decades, often have intervened between the day when they first saw their visions of a better world and the time when the politicians and the statesmen have attempted to make effective those visions.

Mr. Pringle, journalist, author, and associate in journalism at Columbia University, won the Pulitzer prize for biography with his life of Theodore Roosevelt.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MAN OVERBOARD *Freeman Wills Croft* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Corpse afloat off Belfast leads nice but headstrong youngster to foot of gallows. Sweetheart and Insp. French save him.	Though captious may say detective's penultimate reconstruction of crime is too omniscient this one has all the famous French *finesse.*	Impeccable
MURDER ON THE BLUFF *Esther Tyler* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Seacoast mansion, isolated by hurricane, scene of triple killing solved by badly shattered friend of tragic family.	Homicidal, fratricidal, sororicidal yarn with family skeletons jangling furiously, and an unbelievably faithful family servitor.	Able
WHAT GENTLEMAN STRANGLES A LADY? *Robert George Dean* (Crime Club: $2.)	Thompson (he) & Barton (she) effervescent private detectives called in to solve Conn. kidnapping cases which turn into murders.	Cleverly constructed plot spoiled, for crusty judge, by detectives' spurious ebullience—which others may think poifeckly gra-and.	Smart-alecky
BOND GRAYSON MURDERED! *Norman Stanley Bortner* (Macrae-Smith: $2.)	Convicted avunculicide pleads plight in tabloid "feature." Interested Johns Hopkins prof. reopens case, solves 2 killings, wins bride.	Granting amazing police obtuseness in original conviction of suspect, this one has novel method, snappy action, slick sleuthing.	Satisfactory
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THE BODY IN THE BONFIRE *Christopher Bush* (Holt: $2.)	Terrified British cleric reports presence of headless, mutilated cadaver in brushpile to Ludovic Travers, thus starting long chase.	Puzzle of man dead Monday whose hand held murthering dagger Tuesday only one of twiddly bits in this baffler.	Good hunting
THE NINE WAXED FACES *Francis Beeding* (Harpers: $2.)	Mysterious message from Austrian spy sends Col. Granby and R. Hardcastle posthaste to Innsbruck and hair-raising adventure.	First rate international intrigue yarn with picturesque background, gaudy thriller, and some howling typographical errors.	Spine tickler
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Books of the Fall

(*Continued from page* 16)

heart of a brave, kind, wise man. I wish some way that lovely something would come with subjects and predicates and things suitable for the moron minds like mine that are not so much interested in how a man says it as what he says.

So, looking back over the year's books with all those stirring stories of adventure, with all those Isaiahan prophecies of evil which I approved and enjoyed, I feel that it wasn't as good a year as last. But this was the year of a great drouth and the year in which we had another one of those quadrennial America at the Crossroads, papier maché crises — the presidential election. Who could write his best books under those circumstances?

Mr. Canby:

I SUPPOSE that as an early judge of new books I am asked to report not merely on the autumn books which have not yet appeared but also on the important books now currently being read. Not much need be said about the latter, for readers are forming their own judgments. But I should like to register a few second thoughts. "Gone with the Wind" for example:—The extraordinary success of this novel has, of course, surprised every one and puzzled not a few. It seems to me to be due not primarily to any great skill in novel writing or even in the formation of character, although Scarlett O'Hara must be admitted to be extraordinary. But rather to the very great power of tradition here sympathetically and authentically got somehow and put into a narrative. This is how people felt and acted in the South in the War and in Reconstruction—that is what the reader feels, and pursues this tradition through the length of a long, long story. Claude G. Bowers's "Jefferson in Power" is another book now published which impressed me. It shows how much better history an honest historian writes when he is partisan than when he tries to be entirely impartial. He has to be an honest historian, of course—as Bowers is—but an intense feeling for a man or movement gives a warmth in writing which no scientific detachment can supply. Still another recently published book of unusual interest is I. J. Singer's "The Brothers Ashkenazi." This novel, originally written in Yiddish, is an extraordinary build-up of highly objectionable characters into something approaching heroism. This man, who, I understand, is beginning to write in English, is going to be heard from very emphatically. There is also Ramón J. Sender, the author of "Seven Red Sundays," who is one of the oncoming writers of Spain. He could not have written a more timely book if some New York publisher had locked him in a hotel for a week and told him to produce. The seven red Sundays are seven meetings of a group of Spanish revolutionaries and one gets in this vivid story not merely the strangely conflicting philosophies of Spanish radicals but intimate and vigorous pictures of personalities which, as always in Spain, are outstanding.

As for the books yet unpublished, I can list only a few of those I have read which seem to me more than usually interesting. Thoreau fans should note "Men of Concord,"* a selection of the meaty paragraphs which Thoreau wrote about his neighbors, imaginatively illustrated by N. C. Wyeth. Wyeth makes Thoreau too good-looking, but his pictures are far better representations of the Concord scene than any photographs, and in re-creating Thoreau's farmers, and doing it well, he has done something that of course the camera cannot do. Horace A. Eaton's "Thomas De Quincey"* is a biography worth waiting for. The account of De Quincey's childhood is one of the most extraordinary narratives I have ever read and it is very well presented here. Chesterton is to have two memorials, an omnibus to be called "The Man Who Was Chesterton"* and his own "Autobiography,"* which is a little disappointing as a personal record but very rich in the Victorian and Edwardian experience of a very English Englishman who came to know everybody. Another omnibus is "Rodeo,"* a collection of the tales and sketches of R. B. Cunninghame Graham. This man is in the direct succession from George Borrow and a writer who for sheer style deserves more reputation than he has ever been given. Graham was the last of the knights errant, a man whose adventures merely listed would make a chapter. He knew Latin America from Texas to the Argentine as probably no other educated foreigner has done, and knew it at that frontier moment when it was most picturesque. These seemingly simple descriptions and narratives often have more impact than the best constructed short story. Still another man who knew the frontier at its most interesting moment was Audubon, and Constance Rourke's book* of that name, which appears next month, also merits attention. It is not so much a life of Audubon as a narrative sketch charmingly done with a great deal of fascinating description of Louisiana plantations and the swamps and forests where he spent so much of his time. It is the best book on Audubon so far, and Audubon is one of the least celebrated of the really picturesque men in American history.

I must mention more briefly other forthcoming books that interest me particularly. There is "The Chronicle of Aaron Kane,"* by Frederick Wight, a long but interesting novel of a Rhode Island seaman with a vigorous Rhode Island background and adventures all over the world. There is Phillips Russell's "Glittering Century,"* a popular survey of the eighteenth century which, with no new material in it, has an original approach and is very good reading. There is Townsend Scudder's "The Lonely Wayfaring Man,"* which is an account of Emerson's experiences in England when he was greeted there as a kind of prophet from the new world and welcomed not only by the intellectual society of that day but also by all the obscure men and women who were busy trying to turn the industrial revolution out of its sordid tracks. On the basis of careful scholarship, Mr. Scudder has written a book that makes a great man very much alive. I should note also, of course, A. E. Housman's "More Poems"* which unfortunately are also his last poems. Some of these seem to me inferior but a few are as fine as anything he ever wrote—which means as fine as anything done in English in the past century. No one should miss this book. And also that extraordinary publisher's *tour de force*, the original manuscript of Boswell's "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides,"* recently discovered in the form in which this classic was written before publishers' demands and Boswell's own discretion led to its heavy cutting. The sayings of Dr. Johnson which gave the book its original reputation have no addition of merit from this new version, but the very human Boswell in his cups, in his prayers, in his vanity, and in his self-criticism gets many valuable paragraphs. I have not thoroughly digested as yet R. C. Hutchinson's "Shining Scabbard"* which is another autumn novel, a story of the twenty years before the war in France written by an Englishman and certainly unusual and interesting. And another book I have recently read, Milton Waldman's "Biography of a Family: Catherine de Medici and Her Children,"* is a biographical chronicle of very high merit. I am not able to check up on its historicity, though I suspect it to be sound, but I applaud a writer who can take one family, as Waldman does, and write their story in the midst of European confusion which they both helped to create and control. This is a brilliant book.

Mr. Morley:

I AM to try to recross an azure swoon of vacation and say what I remember of books read before I submerged in silence. With the after-effect of the anesthesia still upon me, I shall be brief. I omit also the books that our committee chose as Book-of-the-Month, for they have had, or will have, full attention. I mention only, from my own point of view, books that my subconscious memory decided were worth while. The order is insignificant.

"The Weather in the Streets" (Rosamond Lehmann) a brilliant and painful story suggesting how little one knows of woman unless we understand the whole social plasma in which she is imbedded. (How this grim comment would make Miss Lehmann cackle: I hope she won't see it.) The point about this book is that

(*Continued on page* 28)

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In vivid text and hundreds of striking illustrations a famous American sculptress tells the absorbing story of her eventful life. Much of the book describes Miss Hoffman's world-wide quest for perfect racial types for her sculptures in the Field Museum's "Hall of Man"—a search which led her into strange and dangerous corners of the globe. 416 *pages* $5.00

HEADS AND TALES
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"If you like the opera, you will riot in the pages of 'Of Lena Geyer'. On the other hand, suppose you share my fanatic faith that opera is the silliest pseudo-art ever devised by mortal man . . it wouldn't make any difference; you would still read and bewilderedly enjoy Mrs. Davenport's exultantly operatic story of the rise of a diva . ."
Clifton Fadiman in the New Yorker $2.75

OF LENA GEYER
by MARCIA DAVENPORT

All those in favor of America will say "Aye" to this constructively critical picture of our civilization and all its prospects. Timely, topical, outspoken, it has a vital message for every citizen who wants the *American* way out of our present difficulties clearly and entertainingly explained. $3.00

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by GILBERT SELDES

"The most amazing book this month . . It belongs with the honest books, those rare specimens that come along at intervals and shock the petty minds and enlarge the others. Starting as a poor farmer's daughter, she keeps seeking that world where she feels people must be nobler and bigger . . Eventually she becomes a nurse and those passages are so astonishing that I can only ask you to read them for yourself."—*Kyle Crichton in Life.* $2.75

FOR DEAR LIFE
by BELINDA JELLIFFE

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But Beauty Vanishes

The new novel by the author of HERE LIES A MOST BEAUTIFUL LADY

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"The pulses which Mr. Blaker set racing in *Here Lies a Most Beautiful Lady* are not retarded in *But Beauty Vanishes.* Long live the cyclonic family, the progeny of John Billiter—luscious, tempestuous Beryl and wily George! The book carries through to a rip-snorting conclusion." —*N. Y. Times.* Second Printing. $2.50

Rare *indeed is the novel meriting the praise accorded—*

The LONG NIGHT

By ANDREW LYTLE

"Intensity that carries the reader into the night. Vivid and powerful. Page by page unquestionably better than *Gone With the Wind.*" ELMER DAVIS *in the Saturday Review of Literature.*

"Exciting . . . a first-rate thriller."—CLIFTON FADIMAN *The New Yorker.*

"Marvelous reaction of fascinated apprehension, and effect equal in power to the tension produced by that master of suspense, Poe."—*United Press.*

At all bookstores. $2.50

BOBBS-MERRILL

Books of the Fall

(*Continued from page* 26)

simple readers will mistake for wit or fine writing what is really the most sober honesty and understatement. There is more to be learned about he-and-she psychology in this book than in most of jolly old Havelock Ellis (against whose revered encyclopædia of Thar She Blows, and Sparm at That I long to heave a few merriments).

"Burning City" (Stephen Vincent Benét) the best book of verse he has done. These are short poems, not long ones; and so are most poems. In the Humboldt Current, an antarctic stream which blesses Chile and Peru with energy, I thought with horror of Stephen's picture of New York turned tropical by a shift in the Gulf Stream.

"Eyeless in Gaza" (Aldous Huxley) difficult to read, and savagely annoying at times, but with passages of superb vividness and power. Morbid to a painful degree but if you feel like a shot of salts here it is.

"The Mountain and the Plain" (Herbert Gorman) a vast romanza of the French Revolution whose merit has been somewhat eclipsed by the great success of another huge melodrama ("Gone with the Wind") which appeared at the same moment. Neither should suffer by comparison. I read this book under protest, as I had had enough French Revolution in Carlyle to last me to the gallows, but Gormandized it to the end with appetite and enjoyment.

"The Shipbuilders" (George Blake) is a book I read a year ago and which miraculously stays with me. Perhaps because it deals with the tough mystery of ships. This is a moving and finely honest story of the Glasgow shipyards during Depression, when the great hull of the world's biggest liner lay rusting and abandoned. By simple but cunning contrast it plays the top and bottom of the social scale on the table at once, and is rich in pity and comprehension. A notable book, and specially dear to me because many American publishers were leery of it.

"Rodeo"* (R. B. Cunninghame Graham) an omnibus of the South American tales of a gallant and hotheaded spellbinder. Don Roberto was a rebel against everything we think of as civilization; in some of his tales of the pampas you will find the same kind of magic as in Conrad. They are sketches, episodes, campfire bivouacs, rather than stories.

"'T Aint Right" (Westbrook Pegler) is a book I should admire to discuss more at length. Pegler confirms my thesis that some of our best writers were those who got their training in sports reporting. I have long hankered to see the best of his sardonic Flits of American life gathered in a book. Unfortunately he has suffered here (this is only my own personal opinion) by poor editorial staff-work: there are too many of his European dispatches and not enough of the native scenery. In Europe he was a foreigner and on the defensive; a little too eager, perhaps, to see how comic it all is. But at home, to use a phrase of his own, "he sank his pick into one of the greatest umbrage deposits on the North American continent and began to fling pure umbrage over a wide area." He is astringent as lime juice; the Huck Finn of American journalists, always ready to swing a dead cat through the window of anything that looks like an Endeavor Meeting. How I hanker for some of his classic columns not included in this book—the one on Sally Rand's dressing-room for instance, or the letter to Jimmy Walker, or the dispatches about a certain wedding in Newport. This book, good as it is, will not satisfy the real student of Pegler, but it's a step in the right direction.

"The Flowering of New England" (Van Wyck Brooks) is a book I read only in part last spring, but saved and put aside for desiderated leisurely enjoyment. Here Mr. Brooks has found the theme which he of all critics is beautifully competent to expound; this book renews one's nostalgic love for the old aurora borealis of New England's great days. I hope I shall never forget his casual remark "even the Concord ice had bubbles in it."

"The Oxford Dictionary of English Proverbs," take it by and large, is as fascinating a book for the lover of the anthropology of language as any published this year.

The most important book I've read since coming home, two weeks ago, is "Sherston's Progress" by Sassoon, which continues (or concludes) the memoirs of the Fox Hunting Infantry Officer. There is no substitute for these beautifully honest books in the literature of the War —and they leave the pacifist as muddled as ever.

May I add, just speaking by hunch and from a look round the field, the books I'd like or hope to read which I see now reviewed or announced. They would be, if I had any time for reading:—

G. K. Chesterton's "Autobiography."*

J. L. Lowes: "Essays in Appreciation."

Carl Van Doren: "Three Worlds."

Martha Gellhorn: "The Trouble I've Seen."

The Kittredge Shakespeare.

John Mason Brown: "The Art of Playgoing."*

And a book of a year ago which I saw only in galley proof but never forgot: Marvin Lowenthal's "Autobiography of Montaigne."

The most amusing thing I've seen in any book since my bath of oblivion is in Philip Guedalla's introduction to Duff's "The Truth About Columbus." If America had never been discovered, says P. G., Europe would have "nothing to smoke, a good deal less to drink, and nowhere for Mr. Hugh Walpole to go to or for Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler to come from."

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The Canvases of Venice

VENETIAN PAINTERS. By Frank Jewett Mather, Jr. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1936. $5.

Reviewed by CHANDLER R. POST

THE distinction of Professor Mather, and of this book as one of his works, is that he has elevated the modern science of the history and criticism of art to the realm of literature. There were many men of letters in the elder days, such as Ruskin and Théophile Gautier, who wrote of the fine arts, but they lacked or despised scientific accuracy. *Kunstgeschichte* as a science is indeed a comparatively recent development, and the majority of its exponents have been so bewitched with enthusiasm for the newly desired, scholarly exactitude in the subject that they have neglected—perhaps purposely and disdainfully—the literary form in which they have couched the results of their investigations. Professor Mather, although fully alive to the demands and achievements of modern scholarship, has maintained the old tradition of a presentation worthy of the great art that he treats. The conseqences are that he instructs, while he also pleases, the specialist and that his publications are as agreeable to the layman as collections of essays or as the historical volumes of a Symonds or a Trevelyan.

Granted the supreme significance of his theme, I do not know that his new book needs any further review or praise than this. He has dwelt at length upon the greatest names in Venetian painting, making Titian the cornerstone of his structure, and he has therefore consciously given us only incisive vignettes of the lesser personalities. With the scheme for this book that he has set himself, he treats the early history of Venetian painting somewhat briefly (though with acumen and a convincing control of the material) until he arrives at Giovanni Bellini, whom he rightly considers the true founder of Venice's pictorial grandeur. Some students may think that he rates too highly Bellini's position as an innovator, not allowing enough importance to Venice's constant borrowing from the previous technical experimentation of Florence, especially by Giovanni's father, Jacopo; but at all events he now slackens his pace and gives us a long and masterly exposition of Giovanni's accomplishments that lures us on from page to page. This he follows by a series of similarly penetrating and leisurely chapters on the most outstanding masters of the sixteenth century, devoting no less than three to the various phases of Titian's evolution, and he groups about these luminaries quite as memorable, though properly more succinct, analyses of the satellites who moved in their orbits.

It is not to be expected that every student would agree entirely with all Professor Mather's judgments. The present reviewer, for example, finds it hard to share even his mild admiration for Previtali and grieves that he has not given Moretto a higher place. The principal quarrel, however, that my pupils, the younger generation of lovers of painting, will have with Professor Mather is that he has set the culmination of the Venetian school in the sixteenth century and has considered the eighteenth century only as an aftermath. They sense that Professor Mather is still slightly prejudiced by the glamour of the Renaissance. Those who know him and his other works, however, or who merely discern his wide interests by the many illuminating comparisons to other periods that he makes in this volume will hope that he will soon give us the whole book on later Venetian painting that he is so well fitted to write or on the Italian baroque and rococo in general.

Chandler R. Post is professor of fine arts at Harvard University. His "History of Spanish Painting" is a major work in its field.

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"His forehead, where his helmet had shaded, was still startling white; below it the black eyes and weathered cheeks showed the darker by the contrast. He was tall and slender, but slender with hard riding and living, no gangling boy. And he was dressed, as she liked her men to be, richly and brilliantly, with jewels in his ears and on his fingers, and perfume on his hair."... "He knelt before her, stooping his black head, and her heart turned over."

Thus does NORAH LOFTS, *author of "I Met A Gypsy", describe the first meeting between Sir Walter Raleigh, then thirty years old, and Elizabeth the Queen, then forty-nine, in her beautifully written historical romance...*

HERE WAS A MAN

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HELEN WADDELL

The delicate beauty and purity of Miss Waddell's prose have won for her the esteem of a discriminating audience. Her *Beasts and Saints* acquainted that audience with another of her talents, the gift of translating from the Latin with a skill that enables her to retain the spirit of her medieval material. Her latest work, a translation of selections from the *Vitae Patrum,* deals with the Desert Fathers who founded the ascetic tradition in the West and in whom "inhumanity towards one's self had often its counterpart in an almost divine humanity towards one's neighbor." $2.50

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VENETIAN PAINTERS

The Athens of Italy

HISTORY OF FLORENCE. By Ferdinand Schevill. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1936. $5.

Reviewed by GARRETT MATTINGLY

IN our culture the native city of Dante, Leonardo, Machiavelli, and Michelangelo played for more than two centuries almost the role which Athens played in that of Hellas. And although Florence never enjoyed even the brief political dominance of Athens, yet her power in Central Italy and the widespread activity of her citizens gave one of the first hints of the energy which expanding capitalism was to release in the modern world, while her reputation for turbulent democracy, which so captivated nineteenth century liberal writers, heightens the resemblance to her Greek prototype. In the later Middle Ages Florence rejoiced in a series of able chroniclers, she was the nursing mother of modern historiography, and the exciting drama of her greatness was played on a narrow, highly lighted stage. Much more, therefore, has been written about her past than about that of any other medieval city, more indeed than about many surviving national states. Yet English readers have long lacked a satisfactory general history.

Eminently equipped to supply that lack, Ferdinand Schevill has conceived his task with gratifying breadth. He undertakes to reduce the mass of literature about Florence to the coherent story of the growth and decline of a unified social-economic organism. As the most continuous, characteristic, and decisive expression of that organism, the state is wisely kept in the foreground; this is primarily a political history. But the simultaneous expression in literature and the fine arts is not neglected—it receives seventy pages out of five hundred odd—and the whole is firmly based on an exposition of economic forces and clarified by a realistic analysis of the class relations on which Florentine constitutional and cultural development alike depended.

When Florence finally broke through the crust of feudalism into independent burgher life she found herself surrounded by energetic neighbors engaged in a similar process. She owed her preëminence among them to her merchant bankers and sealed it when they secured the business of the popes. Hence the pro-papal bias of Florence, her obdurate Guelphism, and hence too the impetus and resources to continue her expansion in Tuscany, ruining her rivals and securing her trade routes. To these imperialist traders Florence owed the lively intellects and ardent patriotism which Dante admired, no less than the luxury, the greed, the party quarrels which he detested. To them also she owed the next stage of her development. They brought raw wool and rough homespun from England and Spain, put it out among the peasants drawn from the conquered *contado* to form a city proletariat, and resold the finished cloth to half of Europe. This, the age of Boccaccio, was the "golden age of Florentine democracy." Professor Schevill has no difficulty in showing how hollow a democracy it was. The wage earning masses had no share in it; their one bid for power was deluded, broken, and drowned in blood. The petty bourgeoisie indeed were tickled by the belief that they ruled the city, but their aims were cloudy and confused, and after the failure of the workers they sank back into submission to the greater guilds, to the shrewd oligarchs who had really ruled them all the time.

So the history of the Florentine "democracy" is one of costly wars, forced by the merchants and cheered by the populace, of recurrent bankruptcies and depressions, of political corruption and chicanery, and more and more frenzied finance. Nevertheless it was, for a time, a history of vigorous growth. Money was the key to power, and profits so large and failures so frequent that any citizen might hope to build himself a stone palazzo, though he had no security his grandchildren would occupy it. Thus the oligarchs were reinforced by fresh ability and never seemed more impressive than when, by the conquest of Pisa, they made Florence a first rate Italian and almost a world power. Their triumph was short. In entrenching their individual fortunes they weakened their class, and their operations were now on so large a scale that they received few fresh recruits. When defeat in a war with Lucca intensified popular unrest, most of them were glad to exchange power and freedom for relative security.

By a graduated income tax, by financial and political prestidigitation, and by shrewd concessions to the real welfare and to the democratic sentiments of the people, Cosimo de Medici preserved the shell of the republic under the ægis of his family for sixty years. The splendor of Medici Florence dazzled Europe, typified the Renaissance, and is our chief memory of the city. But always the Medici rode a whirlwind they could not direct. Florence was losing her market for woolen cloth to the very areas she had previously exploited, becoming dependent on the silk and luxury trade and on the risky profits of middlemen and bankers; the masses were alternately restive and apathetic, finances, private and public, always more precarious and involved; although safety depended upon peace and union, the petty Italian states kept up their jealous bickering. Two years after the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent the

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long foreseen catastrophe occurred. The French avalanche swept down, burying Italian civilization in the ruins. For over thirty years Florence managed to keep its head above the sea of blood, but although Machiavelli and Michelangelo are among these last patriots the heroic defense of the Republic in 1530 proved the death agony of Florentine culture. The glorious centuries were over.

Such a story is worth pondering and we must be grateful for its sound and sensible treatment in a single volume. In a work of this scope the discovery of new facts is not to be expected, nor does the temper of its author permit him to press novel generalizations farther than the known facts warrant. But in the criticism, clarification, and synthesis of a great mass of printed material he has produced a model of broad, well balanced, careful scholarship. Specialists will doubtless point out errors in detail and disagree in matters of emphasis. Admirers will sigh that the prose is sometimes clogged by tautologies and by a lecture platform trick of repetitive and over-elaborate transition. But occasional wordiness does not prevent this from being a very meaty book, and the errors could be many more and still leave the text authoritative.

Garrett Mattingly is on the faculty of Long Island University, where he teaches Renaissance history and literature. He is the holder of a Guggenheim fellowship for historical research.

Carnival Children

ALL THEIR CHILDREN WERE ACROBATS. By Harry Hamilton. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1936. $2.

HARRY HAMILTON, who wrote "Banjo on My Knee," has told a matter-of-fact story of the three Donovan children and their sturdy parents who started life in the town of Sentinel on the Mississippi River. The children became the famous Flying Donovans, disporting themselves on the flying trapeze in carnival and circus. Christine Wagner, of a troupe of dancers, finally, for a short space, makes adagio dancers of the brothers Steve and Nick. They both fall in love with her, and the way they finally work through their complications makes the interesting, if slightly concocted, end of the book. Meanwhile the story of the parents' youth and love affair, of the struggle of the children for their own independence, their rise to fame, and how they got their parents to join for a while the Dorfman Combined Shows, is told with a certain breeziness and an intimate knowledge of the life of acrobats.

The manner of the book's writing is somewhat disappointing. While the story flows right along quite naturally, and the various episodes are interesting and sometimes amusing, the tale seems to lack a more vital element it might have had. It is fairly pedestrian, though the material is good of its kind.

News from LONGMANS, GREEN & CO.

A Fieldmouse

"I go among the fields, and catch a glimpse of a stoat or a fieldmouse, peeping out of the withered grass; the creature has a purpose, and its eyes are bright with it; I go amongst the buildings of a city, and I see a man hurrying along—to what? The creature hath a purpose, and its eyes are bright with it." John Keats wrote the above lines; STELLA GIBBONS has used them in the front of her new novel MISS LINSEY AND PA. Those who've read MISS LINSEY will understand the relevance. Miss Linsey had a purpose and her eyes were bright with it. Anybody who enjoys good writing will like MISS LINSEY AND PA. If you have any doubt about it, the publishers will send you FREE (magic word) a sample chapter. Write for it.

★ ★ ★ ★

Golden Horses

From a letter to JUDY VAN DER VEER by Mrs. Jack London: "It seems to me that RIVER PASTURE is not a book to criticize—for the sort of book that it so beautifully *is*, I find it is so adequate. I am not easily drawn into making such a statement, ordinarily. . . . The Golden Palomino description fits my liking to a T. Golden Horses were always my favorites. I longed for years to have *all* my horses golden. . . . I wish I knew you. I wish you could come up to my 1400-acre beauty spot up here." That's a very lovely letter for a very young author to receive from a stranger. And it is typical of the sort of praise JUDY VAN DER VEER has been receiving. Not only good reviews, but unsolicited letters expressing pleasure and gratitude.

Judy Van der Veer

★ ★ ★ ★

Wine

"AARGAU" and "ZUCCO." These aren't cross-word puzzle extinct birds, nor two new Marx Brothers. They're the first and the last words in Andre Simon's DICTIONARY OF WINE, which contains information, listed alphabetically, concerning wine all over the world. It gives literary quotations, too!

★ ★ ★ ★

Scholar

Benjamin Stolberg writes about MARVIN LOWENTHAL: "I am full of admiration for the author's sanity, scholarship, and the way he writes." Mr. Lowenthal's book, THE JEWS OF GERMANY, A Story of Sixteen Centuries, has had the most extraordinary reviews we've ever read. We haven't read one unfavorable notice, and so far we've read well over three hundred.

★ ★ ★ ★

Jeffersonian

In a presidential election year there is usually a good bit of talk about Jefferson and Jeffersonian policies by people who aren't quite sure what the words mean. An Englishman, ARTHUR BRYANT, in his very recent book THE AMERICAN IDEAL has gone straight to the core of the Jeffersonian philosophy. His book is a study of the American ideal through an analysis of the lives and philosophies of eight Americans from Thomas Jefferson to Vachel Lindsay. "A Book," writes Percy Hutchison in the *New York Times*, "one would like to see in the hands of every American, and especially such as are now coming to man's estate."

★ ★ ★ ★

Birds

LOUIS J. HALLE, Jr., is an ornithologist. He lives in Connecticut and studies the birds on his place, which adjoins the Pound Ridge reservation. He's at work now on a book about the birds of his neighborhood, a personal account of his relationship to them. As you drive up to his house, the first thing you're likely to see, as a matter of fact, is several swooping parrots over the lawn. These he brought back with him from Guatemala. Guatemala is the scene of most of the travels he describes in TRANSCARIBBEAN. Herschel Brickell says: "Mr. Halle writes with a great deal of quiet grace, with humor, and with thoughtfulness."

Louis J. Halle, Jr.

★ ★ ★ ★

Skyway to Asia

Out in San Francisco a modest gentleman sat down and wrote a modest book about the men who built the Island bases across the Pacific which made the flight of the China Clipper possible. WILLIAM STEPHEN GROOCH, the author, was one of those men. In fact, he had charge of landing the cargo from the *North Haven* and establishing the air bases. SKYWAY TO ASIA, published early in September, is now in its third printing and high on the best seller lists of the West Coast. One reviewer, remembering his boyhood, cried out to the world: "This book has the charm of *Robinson Crusoe*, and the fascination of Jules Verne."

★ ★ ★ ★

Come My Spade

Julian Meade

"Come my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers and gravemakers; they hold up Adam's profession." — *Hamlet — Act V.* JULIAN MEADE found his title for his new garden book in the above quotation. His book is called ADAM'S PROFESSION AND ITS CONQUEST BY EVE. It won't be published until Wednesday, the 14th, but people are already talking about it. Although it's full of valuable garden information, it also tells the story of how ladies and gentlemen behave when the garden mania gets them.

★ ★ ★ ★

All the books mentioned above are published by LONGMANS, GREEN & COMPANY, *114 Fifth Avenue, New York, and Toronto, Canada. If you wish further information about them or their authors, write to the publishers. Send for the Fall catalogue.*

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RECOMMENDED NEW BOOKS

BENEDICTION

By *Claude Silve.* With Foreword by EDITH WHARTON. This beautifully told love story of a French nobleman and the mysterious lady he brings home to his chateau from China is the winner of the *French Femina* Prize Novel award. Recommended to those readers who delight in fiction of rare literary quality. $2.50

SAN FRANCISCO'S CHINATOWN

By *Charles Caldwell Dobie.* Illustrated by *E. H. Suydam.* The two famous collaborators of "San Francisco: A Pageant" have combined to portray in intimate terms the record of one of the world's most picturesque spots, in one of the season's most beautifully written and illustrated volumes. $5.00

GOLD IS WHERE YOU FIND IT

By *Clements Ripley.* A colorful romance of California in the '70's and '80's, dealing with an exciting and vital phase of America's development. A girl and the man she loves are dramatically involved in the clash of conflicting social and economic change. $2.00

OLD WIRES AND NEW WAVES

The History of the Telegraph Telephone, and Wireless

By *Alvin F. Harlow,* author of "Old Postbags," "Old Waybills," etc. "An absorbing story," says the *N. Y. Herald Tribune* of this colorful, dramatic narrative about communication from the days of the first signal drum to radio. Illustrated. $5.00

THE STUDY OF MAN

An Introduction

By *Ralph Linton.* A popular and authoritative resumé that covers the whole science of anthropology. Recommended for its clarity, its comprehensiveness and its thorough command of an immense and complex field. $4.00

At All Booksellers

D. APPLETON-CENTURY COMPANY
35 West 32nd Street, New York

Reading for Boys and Girls

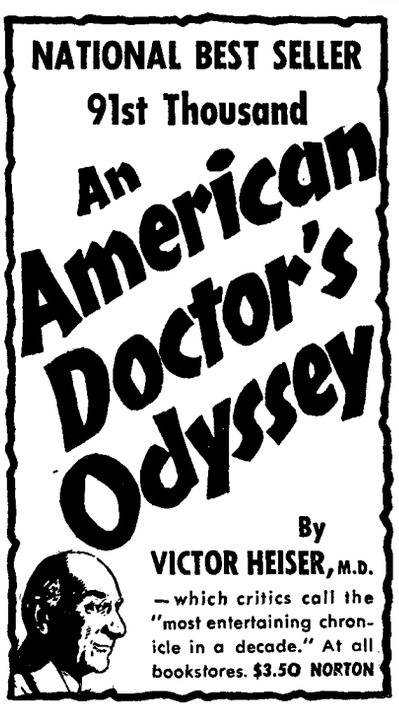
Some Children's Books of the Season

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

TO comment separately on every item in the wide assortment of books for young people, presented this season by various publishers, is obviously impossible within limited space. Certain categories may, however, be established and certain books singled out. Among those presenting general information I have been especially impressed by "The Story of English Life," by Amabel Williams-Ellis and F. J. Fisher (Coward-McCann: $3.75). Mrs. Williams-Ellis is, of course, the daughter of the late St. Loe Strachey, and a well-known novelist. Her collaborator is an M.A. at London University. Their valuable history for the young has been written with special reference to the position of the common people during the centuries in England, and to the progress of art, science, and invention in each period. Social and economic conditions and the class struggle are given their proper importance. The illustrator of the book, the English artist Wilma Hickson, has done an extraordinary job with the graphic simplification of statistics. Illustrations exemplify characteristic workmanship, art, etc., of various times.

In these days when air-waves are constantly voluble with many messages, the modern child will get a good idea of the history of mankind's means of communication through J. Walker McSpadden's "How They Sent the News" (Dodd, Mead: $2.50). This well-illustrated volume traces the history from the first drawings of the mammoth in torch-lit caves, the warning African drum, American Indian smoke signals, lighthouses, and semaphores—down to dots and dashes, the Atlantic cable, the Bell telephone, the heliograph, wireless, and radio. The average boy and girl is also greatly interested in wild animals, and in that field R. W. Thompson presents the life story of Reuben Castang, one of the greatest wild animal trainers of all time ("Wild Animal Man," Morrow: $1.75). The book is introduced by the famous Frank Buck. Sport being an obsession with boys, they will enjoy "The Boy Scouts Year Book of Sport Stories" (Appleton-Century: $2), gathered from *Boys' Life* and the *Boy Scouts Magazine* and edited by Franklin K. Mathiews. Which leads us—though perhaps the girls should have first place—directly into the domain of boys' books. Before me are half a dozen yarns of school and sport. Ralph Henry Barbour "Watch That Pass!" (Appleton-Century: $2) is a hardy perennial, and his football is up-to-date. Stephen Meader, well-known for adventure stories, has a collection of short ones on various sports, "The Will to Win" (Harcourt, Brace: $2); Donal Hamilton Haines, in "David and Jonathan" (Farrar & Rinehart: $1.75) supplies plenty of basketball, baseball, and football at "Hillton Academy." There are others: Earl Schenck Miers, well-known at Rutgers, with "The Backfield Feud" (Appleton-Century: $2), Nelson H. Arnold with "Tinker of Stone Bluff" (Doubleday, Doran: $2), and so on. In the realm of out-of-door adventure, Mr. Meader appears again with the true story of Jim Vanderbeck, an eighteen-year-old diarist of the line-camps, featuring the Canadian Woods in "Trap-Lines North" (Dodd, Mead: $2); Waldo Fleming's "Talking Drums" (Doubleday, Doran: $2) has West Africa for background; Gregory Trent's "In the Stone Age" (Harcourt, Brace: $2) deals with the era of primitive man; and Laurie York Erskine presents once more his popular hero in "Renfrew in the Valley of Vanished Men" (Appleton-Century: $2).

The sea and air are old and new settings for adventure. A boy on a trading-schooner in the French Society Islands is the protagonist of Howard Pease's "Hurricane Weather" (Doubleday, Doran: $2), and for younger children Nora Benjamin tells of a young peoples' summer cruise on a ketch from Long Island Sound to Nantucket. A Lieutenant in the Navy and his wife, Blaine and Dupont Miller, have a technically-informed tale to tell in "Bob Wakefield: Naval Aviator." Adventure shades into the mystery story that appeals to the young of both sexes no less than to their parents. I have looked over nine of these. I can recommend the writing of Geoffrey Household in "The Spanish Cave" (Houghton, Mifflin: $1.75); and such titles as "The Golden Galleon" (Appleton-Century: $2) and "Raiders' Hoard" (Longmans, Green: $1.75) imply buried treasure—in one the result of piracy, and in the other the aftermath of the most northern battle in the Civil War. There's also "A Treasure Ship of Old Quebec" (Dodd, Mead: $1.75), "The Fal-


NATIONAL BEST SELLER
91st Thousand
An American Doctor's Odyssey
By VICTOR HEISER, M.D.
—which critics call the "most entertaining chronicle in a decade." At all bookstores. $3.50 NORTON

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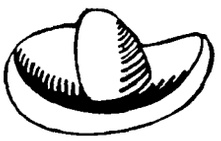
con Mystery" (Harcourt, Brace: $2), which features the great plain of Hungary, and a remarkable stooping haggard (or hawk) in the Central American "Secret of the Maya Well" (Dodd, Mead: $2). Western Africa comes to the fore again in "Flag of the Desert" (Viking: $2) by an author who spent twelve years in Nigeria as District Officer. For girls especially, the old Moravian Seminary at Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, is the locale of "The Seminary's Secret" (Lippincott: $2). Hawaii, the background for "Footprints in the Dust" (Longmans: $2) and "Bulldog Sheila" (Holt: $1.75), emulates Bulldog Drummond in the story bearing her name. There is also the true story of a twelve-year-old Danish girl, Lis Anderson, in "Lis Sails the Atlantic" (Dutton: $2), which she did with her family in an eighteen-metre ketch. Boys should particularly relish Commander Edward Ellsberg's latest, "Spanish Ingots" (Dodd, Mead: $2), exciting submarine adventure to recover gold salvaged from a Spanish galleon; and, in the historical line, "Our Navy" (Houghton Mifflin: $2), by that Western writer for the young, Charles J. Finger. There is a typical industrial story, "The Mill in the Woods," from William Heyliger (Appleton-Century: $2), and there are some good Indian and Western tales, among them being Gertrude Robinson's "Sachim Bird" (Dutton: $2); Hubert Coryell's "Scalp Hunters" (Harcourt, Brace: $2)—these both of Maine, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively; James Willard Schultz's "The White Buffalo Robe" (Houghton Mifflin: $1.75), a Navajo story by Florence Crannell Means (Houghton Mifflin: $2), and Hildegarde Hawthorne's gold rush story "On the Golden Trail" (Longmans, Green: $2). A "natural" is "Jerky" (Morrow: $2), by a cow-ranch owner in Arizona.

But the young ladies need justice done them! They should look for Helen Ferris's collection of stories of love and courage under the title of "Challenge" (Doubleday, Doran: $2), tales by writers as famous as "Ouida" and Melville, ranging to Dorothy Canfield and Walter de la Mare. They will probably want the Faith Baldwin omnibus, "The Girls of Divine Corners" ($2), from Farrar & Rinehart. The same firm publishes the story of a gritty girl on Park ranger service in the wild north country, "McAllister Patrol" (Farrar & Rinehart: $1.75). Random House has half a dozen books for girls on their list, a departure of significance. "Raquel: A Girl of Puerto Rico" ($2) avoids the stereotyped. The Viking Press again presents Theodore Acland Harper, whom I have had occasion to commend, with "Allison's Girl" ($2), a tale of Oregon. Adults play an interesting part in this book. An experienced newspaper woman, "Emma Bugbee," launches "Peggy Covers the News" (Dodd, Mead: $2); and there are two good books about girls going west from school to confront new problems: one of a white girl, "Face West," (Harpers: $2) and her peach-ranching with a Coöperative Association which has to battle its way; one of an Indian girl returning to her mesa and pueblo, written by an artist's wife who has made a special study of the Southwest Indians—"Singing Sands" (Doubleday, Doran: $2).



CREATING A NEW SOCIAL ORDER

In 1921 the new government in Mexico began one of the most dramatic and significant social experiments ever undertaken on a national scale: the education of its people. The enormous task of welding a population of diverse and mixed racial strains, largely illiterate, into a nation of enlightened citizens capable of governing themselves called for more than ordinary pedagogy. The story of this profound national awakening, the technique adopted, the problems met, are studied in this sympathetic volume by an American educator working under a grant from the Julius Rosenwald Fund. He presents, as well, the historical and cultural backgrounds that have made Mexico and its revolution a focal point of world interest today. *Illustrated.* $2.75

MEXICO
A REVOLUTION
BY EDUCATION
BY GEORGE I. SÁNCHEZ
Foreword by Rafael Ramírez

THE VIKING PRESS
18 East 48th St., N. Y. C.

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To all the Booksellers who sell **The Saturday Review:** The Fall season is now open and, if you are going to bag your fair share of book sales, you are going to need plenty of copies of the SRL on hand each week. Now is the time to increase that order which you cut for the summer months. Now is the time to write for complete information concerning our displays, if you are not familiar with them. Bookstore Dept., The Saturday Review, 25 West 45th St., New York City.

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Spender's Short Stories

THE BURNING CACTUS. By Stephen Spender. New York: Random House. 1936. $2.

Reviewed by L. CABOT HEARN

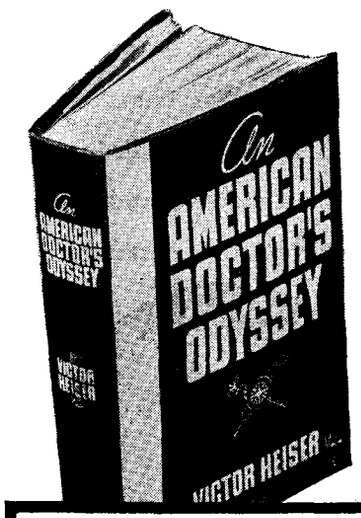
FIVE short stories, one of which is the length of a novelette, are included in this new book by one of that now famous triumvirate of young English poets. Stephen Spender is the lyricist of the group. His short stories display the poet in many phrases and paragraphs. "The Dead Island" even changes into verse in several places. A poem is introduced in "By the Lake." These, of course, are minor matters. The book is most readable and interesting. The general impression one gets is of an intelligent mind, of a sensitive artist, of peculiar material.

The first story deals with a very modern woman drifter, part of that sophisticated and pretty tiresome post-war society that is infrequently amusing and essentially sterile. She drifts into fondness for a young American and they have an affair. The real significance of the story comes in a letter to the lady from a doctor after she has suffered from the young man's insanity. The physician says:

> Yet another though terrible way of expressing this is to say that he *is* the world, or that in him a very important part of our world reveals itself. In him is incarnated the moment when a civilization begins to lose its grip, when violence becomes an end in itself, history rushes, the boundaries of nations alter so rapidly that there is an inflation in the printing of maps, the bristling turreted forms of Gothic cathedrals suddenly live again in the swirling forms of battleships with their cargo of destruction and hell copied from the nightmares of medieval artists. How, then, shall one condemn an artist who, being unable to create, lives in his own being, the poem, the dance, the madness, which he apprehends from the world around him?

There is grace and aptness in Mr. Spender's writing and also—one cannot escape it—the art of the amateur. Mr. Spender is ordinarily better than an amateur, but there are traces of it in his stories, just as there are traces of the simpler Henry James.

Mr. Spender has a distinct sense of the tragic. He has also no little power at characterization. His people are alive. His descriptions have beauty and touches of originality. It is too soon to say how far he will go in prose, if he chooses to pursue the short story or to attempt the novel. He deals with aspects of a society that we may well hope is perishing, though the indications that it is are certainly not very definite. He deals with the struggle of the artist in the present social mess, and with the battle of intelligence against stupidity. Three of his stories were written in 1935. "The Burning Cactus" is earlier; the first version of "By the Lake" was composed nine years ago.



NATIONAL BEST SELLER
91st THOUSAND
Critics call An American Doctor's Odyssey by Victor Heiser the "most entertaining chronicle in a decade." **$3.50 NORTON**

Mother's Helper

LETTERS TO SUSAN. By Margaret Culkin Banning. New York: Harper and Brothers. 1936. $1.50.

Reviewed by MARJORIE HILLIS

HERE is a book written for girls which will be much more popular with their mothers and teachers. A clear-cut, economically expressed statement of what is expected of the modern young woman (but *not* written for her) serves as a prelude and should interest her very much. It lists a rather terrifying number of such accomplishments as Facing Stag Lines at Parties and being familiar with "The Imitation of Christ" and has all the fascination of an intelligence test or the "Ask Me Another" game that we used to play so avidly. It is, also, a fair and well-thought-out list that any girl might well take as a guide.

Then come the letters themselves, full of all the wisdom and kindness and tolerance that are so aggravating to the young. They tell Susan—the fictitious college daughter who has so obligingly, if unconvincingly, furnished the situations—just what to do about sex and drinking and overdrawing her allowance and liking one young man when she's engaged to another. They are written with sympathy and understanding and all the advice is infuriatingly right. They should be extraordinarily helpful to the many people who find the younger generation as incomprehensible as that generation finds them; and also to the girls for whom they were written—in a very few years, when the need for them has passed.

Retracting our own words, there are some things in this readable little volume which the most self-confident young woman might find useful right now. Not the fundamental things, which the worthwhile Susans will insist upon finding out for themselves, but the less important ones, such as what to do about an unpopular friend, how to act in another person's house, and when it's all right to pay your own way, even if you're out with your best young man. Every young woman is trying hectically to collect the answers to a thousand such questions, and the author has slipped in a lot of answers for any reader to absorb while she's being defiant about the more important matters.

Whether or not the daughters profit from this volume, it is proof that a mother gets a lot of wisdom out of having a daughter.

Marjorie Hillis (*see page* 9) *is the author of "Live Alone and Like It."*

Collected Poems
of
FORD MADOX FORD

Introduction by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

This is the first extensive printing in book form in America of Mr. Ford's *Poems,* including the poems which have appeared in England in *Collected* Poems (1916); *On Heaven and Poems Written on Active Service* (1918), and *New Poems* (1927), and a section of hitherto unpublished poems, called *Buckshee—Poems for Haitchka in France.* $3.00

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 114 Fifth Ave., New York

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 132)

PEABODY—"THE BOOK OF THE LITTLE PAST."

It happens that way in the world
With everything you see;
Some people have their hair all curled,
Some straight as straight can be,—
It is a mystery. . . .
And you may know it is not Fair
But that won't give you Curly Hair.

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The New Books

Biography

ANNE DOUGLAS SEDGWICK: A Portrait in Letters: Edited by Basil de Sélincourt. Houghton Mifflin. 1936. $2.75.

This is the personal record of a charming and finely bred woman whose novels enjoyed great popularity and earned deserved praise for their excellent style. The letters themselves are written chiefly to American relatives and close friends, and record the beginnings of a literary career, and describe association with many of the British literary figures of the first twenty years of the century. They are full of personality and even more than Miss Sedgwick's novels give an impression of fine taste and rich sentiment. Her judgment, however, of the literary movements of her day seems to have been quite conventional and it is interesting to see in the letters written during the war period how readily her mind floated on all the current prejudices and misconceptions of the time. There seems to have been no sort of atrocity too tough for her to accept. This, however, is quite incidental to a portrait of a literary life and a series of friendships which is in refreshing contrast to the hard-boiled experiences of some of her less gently bred contemporaries. One feels that she was an aristocrat to the core and had the courage of an aristocrat in face of her disabilities and ill health, but it cannot be said that her intellectual niceties were equal to her good taste.

H. S. C.

Fiction

CHINA BOY. By Idwal Jones. Los Angeles: The Primavera Press. 1936. $2.50.

Why is not Idwal Jones better known? For nearly fifteen years he has been appearing, at too long intervals, in the magazines, and everything he has written has shown a notable individuality. Occasionally a book of his has appeared but if published by an Eastern firm it has been eased into circulation with a curious secretiveness, and if by a Western firm it has contrived to get even less publicity. Meanwhile a good many other Pacific coast reputations have been energetically inflated for far less cause. Mr. Jones has a vast stock of fascinating, curious, and even exotic lore; he has gusto and sensitiveness and wisdom; he is a short-story writer of great skill; and his non-fictional representations of earlier times in California and of its less celebrated persons and places today are the best obtainable anywhere. He ought to be a first-rate property for any publisher. Or, if that too crassly recommends him to a business known principally for its idealism, let us also say that to bring him more forcibly to the attention of people who like good writing would be an important public service.

"China Boy" presents six short stories set among the Chinese and Japanese of San Francisco and the now exhausted gold fields. All but one of them—"Li Fang Serves Tea," in which the white protagonist is done too melodramatically—are distinguished work. Two of them, "A Party at Mr. K. Nagoya's" and "Miss Mori," are memorable—and we use the adjective literally, having remembered them with great pleasure ever since their original magazine publication. All of them issue from Mr. Jones's delight in the countryside and in the ways of the Asiatic transplanted to it, all of them combine a realistic and even hardboiled understanding with an amused exploitation of the fantastic, and all of them show a very skillful technique. The book is probably the best collection of short stories currently offered.

B. DV.

WHITE BANNERS. By Lloyd C. Douglas. Houghton Mifflin. 1936. $2.50.

When Hannah Parmalee is blown by a blizzard into Paul Ward's house and stays on to work for him and his family it transpires she is no ordinary domestic. She completely transforms the Wards' home life, starting with the Ward ice-box and ending with the Ward philosophy of life. She finds them floundering along on a professorial salary in a morass of debts, but they are rolling in wealth and ever so much happier before Hannah finishes with them. Hannah's past is interesting, too, and it is her past which forms a considerable part of the plot, a plot which is resolved at last by the infinite capacity of Hannah, the Wards, and their friends to meddle in each other's business.

Devotees of Mr. Lloyd Douglas's work will not be surprised to hear Hannah preaching the doctrine of nonresistance as she peels the potatoes, saying "Quite so" and giving a brief historical account of the rise of the Dawn Man, sketched in bold detail. It is more likely to surprise them to find that Hannah has difficulty in recalling Mendel's name, though of course she is thoroughly conversant with his theory; and it ought to surprise everybody to hear Hannah's speech referred to as "simple." Hannah is a darb at argument.

The popularity of this author's earlier works would seem likely to predicate at least an equal success for "White Banners" and must mean that a great many

(*Continued on page* 37)

THE STORK

FROM LONG DESCRIPTIONS I HAVE HEARD,
I GUESS THIS CREATURE IS A BIRD.
I'VE NOTHING ELSE OF HIM TO SAY,
EXCEPT I WISH HE'D GO AWAY.

ANY BABIES IN THEIR RIGHT MINDS are up in arms about Ogden Nash's new book. In the first place they can't read it. In the second, it contains occasional anti-baby propaganda like the poem above, one of the 73 in the book. There might be other complaints, but babies can't count any higher.

Price, $2. • SIMON AND SCHUSTER • *Publishers*

THE BAD PARENT'S GARDEN OF VERSE

BY OGDEN NASH

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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THOUGH a considerable honor, it seemed also slightly detrimental to the status of the poetry of *Audrey Wurdemann* that she received the Pulitzer Prize several years ago. For some reason the critical attitude seems to be that, because of the award, her writing is suspect. (No compliment, incidentally, to the Pulitzer judges!) This strikes me as ill-reasoned nonsense. Her recent venture into narrative, "The Seven Sins," I did not, frankly, regard as her best work, though it was able—but now that she comes before us again with "Splendour in the Grass" (Harper & Bros. $2), she only confirms my impression that she is an interesting and genuine poet. Awards seldom do much good to a reputation. Either they come so long after the finest work has been done that they are in the nature of a gratuitous insult or they imply that honest unassuming work is more than it actually is at the moment. Miss Wurdemann is an honest artist, hoes her own row, and bides her time. She is the opposite of pretentious, and simply does what interests her, quite unimpressed by plaudits or lack of them.

Although the mirrors' marvel gives me back,
Exact reflection, line for line the same,
Colour for colour, yet I know the lack
Of some elusive thing that has no name.
And if, like Alice, through quicksilver mist,
I stepped into the room beyond this glass,
I would expect a certain nightmare twist,
A shadow passing where no shadows pass.
I am quite sure the world would not be quiet
Within the mirror—and no constancy
Precise and perfect; the familiar by it
With shift of emphasis sufficiently
Be warped, that my own face and all things near it
Turn changeling, and I be the first to fear it.

She sings of a flower-cart in the city and of the earth as a minor planet, she writes footnotes for the Rhinegold and a moving post-death comment on "A. E." She chooses willows, and cypripredium, and quicksilver blossom. She discourses of ancient Egypt, and Ishmael, and unicorns. She writes briefly and at length. Sometimes she is merely girlish, sometimes very wise. She is a rebel in love, a stoic concerning the heart, one who objects to apostles becoming stained-glass saints and thereby losing their humanity. I could wish that sometimes she would sharpen the edge of her verses more, but her facility is not superficial. In such poems as "Egyptian Geese," "Grapes to Eat," "Fatal Season," she is precise and original. This book, though it is no new introduction to her merits, is another proof of them. She is a good craftsman.

A slight book in bulk is *Robert Francis's "Stand With Me Here"* (Macmillan. $1.75), but I have found a distinct person in it. He is another of our New Englanders, terse and direct. His portraits of the three New England sisters are like those of the Parcae. He has seen Whitman and Shelley plain. His impressions have salience.

WALLS

A passerby might just as well be blind.
These walls are walls no passer sees behind.
Or wants or needs to want to see behind.
Let the walls hide what they are there to bind.
Out-of-sight they say is out-of-mind.
The walls are cruel and the walls are kind.

That is simple enough, in all conscience (with a tang of Frost), yet it manages to say a good deal. I like his "Pitch Pine" too, that displays how

Small tufts of needles here and there
Bristle from the bark like hair
On a man's knuckle, in his ear.

I like his "Diver" and his impressions of onion fields and haying time and apple-gatherers.

It would be inequitable to lay too great emphasis on this volume; but, in expectation of finding little, in reality I found much. Those who are fond of the lonely New England country world will find its flavor here, will discover dark comfort in these unobtrusive verses.

The above two books were the last I read away from New York, save for one of the first series of "Poems for Two Bits," published by John Wheelwright at 86 Leverette Street, Boston, Massachusetts. This particular small pamphlet volume, a narrative poem, "Murder at Pottsville" by *Kenneth Whelan*, is by a young writer of Pawtucket, whose poem "In a Dark Hour" was featured by *Frances Frost* in the *American Poetry Journal* for January, 1935. Professor *S. Foster Damon* thinks his work most promising. He certainly handles with originality the story of Aeneas O'Fallon, Pennsylvania miner, accused of murdering his wife, and how Harrison "Spike" Sparks covered the trial. All the sordidness of the press-played-up sensation is in this brief account, and a deep human undercurrent that arraigns human society, as it tells of tortured confession, sentence to State Asylum, escape and suicide. It's all easily enough understood and the verse flickers illuminatingly over the ironic and tragic picture. An appended poem, "Decade," deals with hunger in this age, both physical and of the heart for some hope. Whelan is a poet worth watching. He should be encouraged. He can pack a lot into a few lines.

Farrar & Rinehart have issued in two slight brochures, boxed, a fragment of an unfinished post-Civil-War story, "Worleys," and a poem sequence called "The Old House in the Country" by the late *Lizette Woodworth Reese. Disjecta membra poetae.* There is nothing here that will add to her reputation. These two little books are chiefly of interest to collectors.

I returned to the office to find several books of poetry that deserve special attention. I shall treat them in the next appearance of this department. A collection of the poetry of *John Hall Wheelock* is of particular interest.

THE NEW BOOK BY HILAIRE Belloc

BELLOC'S forte is historical portraiture—and in this volume he makes the most of it . . . 23 brilliant biographical sketches, including

HENRY VIII
ANNE BOLEYN
QUEEN ELIZABETH
CROMWELL
MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS
RICHELIEU
JAMES I
HENRY IV (of France)
DESCARTES
MARY TUDOR
LOUIS XIV

and other famous Reformation men and women. 320 pages, 23 illustrations in color by Jean Charlot. $3.50. *Just published*

CHARACTERS OF THE REFORMATION

SHEED & WARD, Publishers, 63 Fifth Ave., N.Y

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Reviewing Reviews

"HAD it appeared as an ordinary first novel," writes Ralph Thompson in the *New York Times,* of E. P. O'Donnell's "Green Margins," without the attractive flutter of a thousand-dollar bill and the great circulation assumed by book-club blessing, this reviewer, only human, would probably have emphasized its virtues (which are real enough) and forgotten its weaknesses, or at least not harped on them. But such is the risk run by a literary prize winner."

It's too early to collect the reviews of "Green Margins," but what Mr. Thompson says applies to the reviews of other prize novels. Although they seem to be coming out at the rate of about one a week, they still get plenty of space in the papers. Recent exhibits, however, leave it an open, not to say a moot, question whether the extra attention is entirely beneficial. On the whole, between Mrs. Van Etten's "I Am the Fox" and John T. McIntyre's "Steps Going Down," the former, which won the larger prize, seems to have paid a bit more heavily in adverse criticism.

Arranging the reviews of "I Am the Fox" and "Steps Going Down" in ascending order of approval, one finds both ends of the list occupied by Clifton Fadiman of *The New Yorker.* "I have just time and space to warn you away from a novel called 'I Am the Fox,'" he wrote; "one of the dullest and most pretentious I have read in some time." And of "Steps Going Down:"—"Whatever niche you assign him—I doubt that Mr. McIntyre worries much over niches—you won't find it easy to put his book down, and this department takes a modest pride in the infrequency with which it makes such claims."

In favor of "I Am the Fox" we find Harry Hansen in the N. Y. *World-Telegram:* "Expertly written and a superb chapter of female history;" Van Gelder in the *Times:* "The finest novel discovered by means of a publishers' award contest in the last several years;" Lorine Pruette in the *Herald-Tribune Books:* "A remarkable first novel, not only for its narrative skill but in its emotional use of ideas and the poetry of its conception."

For the negative appeared, besides Mr. Fadiman, Dawn Powell in *The New Republic:* "Fresh material, but she seems unable to give it any great significance;" and Louis Kronenberger in *The Nation:* "Just facile and plausible enough to be inordinately bad." Out-of-N. Y. reviews were favorable in Buffalo, Boston, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee; mildly neutral in Denver, Richmond, and Nashville; and unfavorable only in Kansas City: "A typically uneven first novel . . . $10,000!"

"Steps Going Down," although less "literary," hence less likely to be regarded as pretentious, got its quota of abuse. Lewis Gannett in the *Herald-Tribune* lifted an eyebrow: "Maybe this is virile he-man literature, and will knock the European judges of the All-Nations Contest cold. Somehow, I doubt it." N. L. Rothman in the *SRL* called it "a slick and facile job . . . empty of what we know to be life." Albert Halper ("Union Square," "The Foundry") let loose this in *The New Masses:* "In the opinion of this reviewer the publishers have picked a dud. 'Steps Going Down' is not even first-class tripe like 'Anthony Adverse,' 'Gone with the Wind,' or the Kathleen Norris sagas." Malcolm Cowley in *The New Republic* offered "condolences to the judges who had to read the 499 other entries" in the contest. And the *Kansas City Star,* which seems to be hard to please, called it "dull and disappointing."

Pro-"Steps" critics however included Percy Hutchinson in the N. Y. *Times Book Review:* "We forecast that it will be widely read and not because it is a prize novel but because it is honestly and faithfully done;" the *Cleveland News:* "Perfectly swell reading and not to be missed;" the Philadelphia papers in a body—representing Mr. McIntyre's home town?—and Winifred Van Etten herself, who reviewed "Steps Going Down" for the *Des Moines Register and Tribune:* "A kind of American 'Lower Depths' . . . Mr. McIntyre has given his novel significance not to be found in any mere 'cross section.'"

No doubt if these two books had not been prize novels the proportion of praise would have been far higher but at the same time the total review wordage would have been very much less. It would be interesting to know what effect all this pro-and-con shouting has on the readers who are exposed to it. Do the reviews make you want to read "I Am the Fox" and/or "Steps Going Down?" If so, which and why? Write in and tell us. This may be the makings of a readers' forum for the letter page.

The New Books

(*Continued from page* 35)

people like to take their religion in a glass of orange juice or a spoonful of jelly. They like to have religion sneaked up on them. Perhaps they like to have God called "They-or He-or It-or Whoever." Given this point of view, Hannah is certainly the girl to put it over. Disclaiming anything to do with church-going or theology, with a "puckery" smile and "a quiet look" she gently urges those near and dear to her into contact with a Source of Power. Lloyd Douglas fans will be pleased and possibly solaced by this book. People who prefer to call a God a God may not be so crazy about Hannah.

C. M.

THE DOOR IN THE GRIMMING. By Paula Grogger. Putnam. 1936. $2.75.

In recent years Styria has become well known to the *Ausländer* as the stronghold of the Austrian Nazi movement. It was in the midst of the awful crags and peaceful valleys which Paula Grogger describes in this book that the murder of Dollfuss was planned, and many a bloody raid on Heimwehr Carinthia has gone by the hidden paths of the Styrian goatherd. That a Styria of law-abiding, contented, and stupid peasantry lay hidden beneath the headlines might have been guessed, but it is comforting to find positive confirmation in Miss Grogger's novel. And though her story is set in the Napoleonic period, there can be no doubt that her characters are drawn from the simple lot of people

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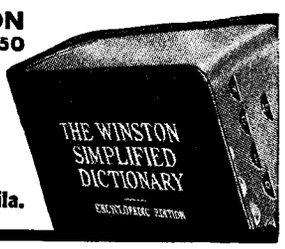

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with whom she has lived and about whom she has written.

Flaxen-haired, blue-eyed Constantia, after one or two minor affairs of the heart, falls in love with the Hunter, who is killed in an attempt to steal the legendary treasure which lies behind a stone door at the top of Mount Grimming. His beloved finds immediate consolation in a *mariage de raison* with the stolid and relatively wealthy peasant Andreas Stralz. Three handsome but dull sons are the first fruits of this marriage.

Reprinted from Oct. 1936 Issue of BOOK-of-the-MONTH CLUB *News.*

HERE is a novel so timely that it is a pleasure to state in writing of it, that it is clearly a work of art, inspired by a passionate interest in human nature, and in no sense propaganda or journalism. Señor Sender is recognized already as one of the most powerful of younger Spanish writers. Those who have read his novel of the great struggle in Morocco will not soon forget its brilliant narrative. I regard it as one of the best war novels I have ever read. *Seven Red Sundays,* his last book, is the story of seven Sundays in the history of a Spanish revolt which proved abortive. It is the background of what is happening now in Spain, and its chief heroes are the anarcho-syndicalists whose name and actions are equally puzzling to readers of the daily news. They can never, says the author, be neglected in Spanish affairs, because they are idealists, with revolvers in their hands, sabotaging (as in this book) the life lines of the industrial state, cutting power lines, bombing factories, committing actions called criminal because of their belief that only by overthrowing the modern state can humanity survive without a real program, believing idealistically that when the state is overthrown the common man will assert his desire to live nobly and virtuously. Willing to kill, still more willing to die, they represent one of those fanatical movements of generosity and self-sacrifice which have always been important in history, though never leading to the Utopia their participants have expected. Read *Seven Red Sundays* and you will meet, much more effectively than in Mr. Bates' alien novels, real Spaniards who are credible because in spite of their confusion of thinking they are so obviously real. Each narrative is dramatic. Each group is intensely human. Here is a spiritual drama of Spain that is as good as literature as it is significant as a footnote to current history.

HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

439 *pages.* $2.50

Seven Red Sundays

BY

RAMÓN J. SENDER

LIVERIGHT

To help care for this vigorous brood of males Constantia adopts a female helper, Regina, the eldest daughter of the impoverished schoolmaster. There is nothing heroic about this shy little girl, but the naiveté of her manner and her divine innocence make her a charming if unreal character. Her lover, too, is not, despite the efforts of the author, a haunted, proud bastard of the school of Byron and Hugo; he is hardly more than a country boor. The other characters, also, are as lifeless as the figures of a tapestry.

The tale of the Grimming treasure is one among many which were told in all the mountains of Europe during the Middle Ages. It is interesting for the folklorist and a pleasant yarn for the casual reader, but far too frail to support the long novel which Miss Grogger has written about it. There is too much waiting between episodes, too much blurring of time. That the book has gone through forty editions in the original German only proves that the Germanic soul is capable of contemplating endlessly a murmuring stream in a quiet valley bordered by the misty peaks of green mountains. Most American readers will do well to save "The Door in the Grimming" for a moody autumnal evening.

M. L. R.

THE HAPPY MARINERS. By Gerald Bullett. Dodge. 1936. $2.

Just what happened to the Robinson children on those long shimmering afternoons down by their toy pond? One can guess that all week at school their heads had been crammed with the bloody facts of English history, that at night their Mother had probably read to them from "Crusoe," or "Treasure Island," or "Peter and Wendy." Mr. Bullett only tells us that they made a lurid map of a desert island, broke a tiny sailing vessel out of a glass bottle mysteriously given them, and suddenly found themselves launched on a series of adventures in which everything they had pictured began to happen, but with the most alarming additions. Mr. Bullett does not explain this. He merely suggests that a child's mind is like those little Indian boxes that come so cunningly contained one within the other. Sir James Barrie once said much the same thing. And both Sir James and Mr. Bullett want forgetful adults to remember that there is a terrifying difference between an island of makebelieve and that same island come true.

This book, in Walter de la Mare's phrase, is for the young of all ages. It is childlike without being childish. Children will shiver and giggle over its queernesses; older people will mull over its wisdom. Like old Daniel Defoe, Mr. Bullett has a thunderingly realistic way of story-telling. Like Barrie, he has a weakness for sentimental piratical gentlemen. But he is more romantic than Barrie. His children are serious-minded adventurers, not irresponsible changelings. Sometimes he seems to turn the screws of horror hard upon them, but it is the bitter truth of childhood itself that compels him to.

A writer of a so-called children's story has a fearful omnipotence. Be it said that Mr. Bullett has not exploited the children to amuse the grown-ups.

D. K.

TALES OF THE NORTHWEST. By William Joseph Snelling. Edited, with an Introduction by John T. Flanagan. University of Minnesota Press. 1936. $3.50.

In reprinting Snelling's rare "Tales of the Northwest" the editor and the University of Minnesota Press have done a useful service to students of American literature and to historians interested in the region concerned, not merely by making accessible these readable accounts of Indian and hunter, but also by giving the collection so appropriate a format. Snelling is an almost forgotten figure, who, disgusted with the romanticization of the Indian and the frontier, determined to tell the truth about both, which he does with something of Melville's sardonic reticence. One of the tales, "The Bois Brulé," is filled with a good deal of melodramatic rhodomontade, but the surprising thing about most of the stories, first published in 1830, is the vigor and directness of Snelling's narrative method.

H. M. J.

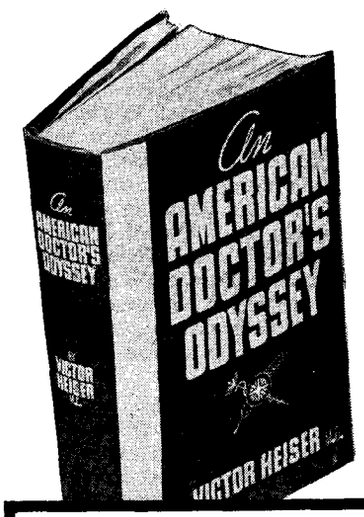
Miscellaneous

HOLD 'EM GIRLS. By Judson P. Philips and Robert W. Wood, Jr. Putnam. 1936. $1.

For a clear, compact description of the mechanics of a football game as it is currently played the Messrs. Philips and Wood have produced a most satisfactory and significant brochure. Their touch is light, their manner is sure, their information is exact. They have crowded into eighty-two pages and an index, all you need to know about the game, providing it remains fairly stable and not in the state of neurotic flux which has characterized it for several years.

It does not require a very old man to realize that football today has no relation to football ten years ago, or yesterday, or even a half hour ago. The basic elements have remained the same, in the sense that the football is still the chief instrument of the game and that men

(*Continued on page* 40)



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Rogers Bibliography

BRUCE ROGERS: A Bibliography. By Irvin Haas. Mt. Vernon, N. Y.: Peter Pauper Press. 1936. $3.50.

IT was in 1925 that Mr. Frederic Warde compiled his "Bruce Rogers, Designer of Books," with a careful checklist of Mr. Rogers's work from 1885 to 1925. This book was the first serious attempt to list such issues and has a permanent place on any shelf of bibliographies as well as of biographies. But such a versatile genius as Mr. Rogers has not been idle in the past twelve years, and a continuation of Mr. Warde's book has been needed.

Mr. Haas has wisely chosen not to attempt a further biographical treatise: Warde dealt well with his subject, and Mr. Rogers's later doings have been chronicled assiduously by his contemporaries. So this volume is devoted almost entirely to additions to Warde's list. It finds no item earlier than the unique edition of Bryant's "Forest Hymn," 1885, recorded in Warde, but about twenty-five items previous to the Riverside days, and previously unlisted, are here set down, including some interesting cover designs of the nineties. Nearly ninety new items of the Riverside days (1894-1914) are listed, almost as many as in Warde. The total number of items, mainly books, in which Mr. Rogers had a major or a minor part, is one hundred and ninety-four: while some of his broadsides and brochures are listed no attempt has been made to make such a list complete. What a job it would be to list all the B. R. ephemera—such as the "Q" which he soldered together out of a T-top and an O for the *Harvard Architectural Quarterly!* But in almost all of the items here given, Mr. Rogers's hand is obvious, and the aid to collectors and librarians which this book will give is very great.

There is a short list of books about Mr. Rogers, a prefatory note by him, an introductory letter from Mrs. Warde, whose dextrous phrasing well sets forth some of the subtler aspects of his genius, and a full index. The book has been printed in Mr. Rogers's own *Centaur* type, and appropriately in the same sized volume as Warde. The book has long been looked for, and will be eagerly welcomed.

Cadmus, Trajan, and Mr. Goudy

THE CAPITALS FROM THE TRAJAN COLUMN AT ROME. By Frederic W. Goudy. New York: Oxford University Press. 1936. $3.

Mr. Goudy is our foremost designer of letters, and what he says about them must be listened to with the respect due to a devoted student of these forms. Many of his hundred type faces have shown the strong influence of classic letters, though, curiously enough, they have always borne the indubitable impress of Mr. Goudy's own forceful personality. This is all quite as it should be: slavishly to copy letters, even good letters, is stultifying. It is greatly to Mr. Goudy's credit that, feeling the strong attraction of Roman inscriptions, he has taken the best of them to serve him as inspiration.

The six lines of inscription on the Trajan column at Rome, though they lack the letters H J K U W Y Z, show the Roman letter in a pure form. Mr. Goudy has taken these, and carefully redrawn them for flat, black and white reproduction, and then engraved them in wood. Each letter is enclosed within a square background of solid color. Mr. Goudy states, and the result evidences it, that he has carefully studied the letters, and where variations exist in the several letters of the same kind on the column, he has selected the more representative forms for his own redrawings. Now the result is curious. For the inscription letters (shown in a good photographic reproduction) do not look like Mr. Goudy's. The reason is that the ones on the column are cut in stone and have the help or hindrance of light and shadow, while the drawn and engraved letters are two dimensional only. The serifs, so prominent a feature of all type letters, and rather obtrusive in Mr. Goudy's present redrawing, are inconspicuous in the inscription. In fact the stone cut letters present a closer affinity with their Greek prototypes than with Mr. Goudy's. The impossibility of translating one kind of lettering into another kind is here completely exemplified. Some of Mr. Eric Gill's capital letters, though they have a certain timidity as type letters, look more like the inscriptional ones, perhaps because he has himself worked in stone. But they have none of the robustness of Mr. Goudy's superb *Hadriano.* Incidentally, Mr. Goudy has really captured the effect in his beautiful *Trajan* type shown in a few lines on the title page.

All this is far from condemning the book. It makes it the more interesting and provocative. For in addition to the comparisons thus made available from the hand of a skilled letter designer, there is a considerable amount of informative text on Roman letters and lettering, in Mr. Goudy's usual clear exposition. Besides, the book is printed in types of Mr. Goudy's own designing, some here used for the first time. Collectors and printers should have the book, especially those who possess his earlier treatise on "The Alphabet."

Of Paper

ZUR KULTURGESCHICHTE DES PAPIERS. Leipzig: Hans H. Bockwitz.

This is a folio of some hundred pages on the history of the manufacture of paper. Whether one can read the German text or not, the innumerable pictures of occidental and oriental paper making are sufficiently illustrative to be readily understood: they are selected with discrimination and reproduced with care in suitable processes and in several colors.

SIXTY ODD

A PERSONAL HISTORY by Ruth Huntington Sessions

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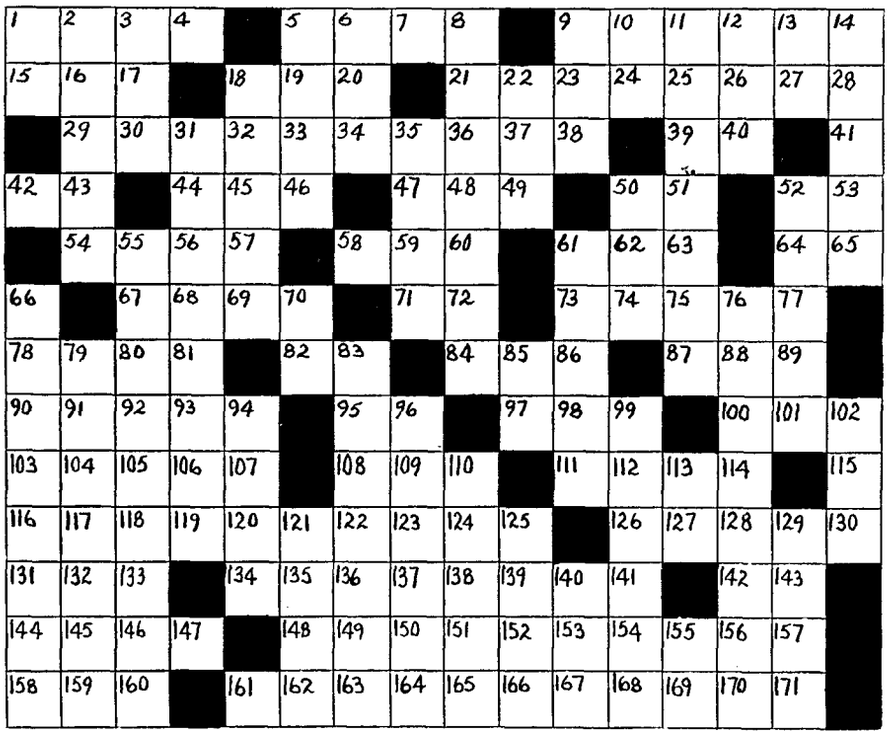
Double-Crostics: No. 133

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-three words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Unless otherwise indicated, the author is English or American.

DEFINITIONS

I. Literary gleanings.

II. Opera by Meyerbeer.

III. An alms box (Eccl.).

IV. Natural intelligence (2 words).

V. Fragrant (comp.).

VI. Digressive; erratic.

VII. Revolutionary War mercenaries.

VIII. Character in "Othello."

IX. Lax, slack.

X. Pledge.

XI. Character in "Twelfth Night."

XII. Menaces.

XIII. Atmospheric element.

XIV. English historian (1737-1794).

XV. An instant (colloq.).

XVI. Noisome exhalation.

XVII. Prefigure.

XVIII. Immediately.

XIX. Theban statesman and general (B. C. 418(?) -362).

XX. One of the judges of the Dead (Gr.).

XXI. Author of the "Drapier Letters."

XXII. French city.

XXIII. Female water sprites.

WORDS

108 88 62 118 56 131 97 113

160 95 109 142 129 48 41

87 164 37 85

157 71 122 64 8 33 45 19 4

156 61 120 139 104 57 166 69 27 146 128 47

91 167 46 5 99 17 107 42 50 154

73 151 170 63 123 126 138 106

83 162 39 93 115 132

148 112 137 15 163

149 30 21 103 60 168

67 79 16 125 35

68 127 31 10 140 28 51

58 13 44 133

100 29 144 150 59 159

9 169 12 143 49

81 72 11 78 74 7 52 119 171

117 23 101 134 90 18 161 89 145 1

24 55 152 141 2 84 165 114 82

38 136 3 75 65 40 25 116 110 6 20

14 147 124 54 153 111 76 36 53 98 26 66

86 70 155 80 34

32 22 94 102 158 121 96

77 92 135 130 105 43

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 34 of this issue.

The New Books

(*Continued from page* 38)

rather than dice are still used as players. But they are certainly not doing the same things they used to do. The authors make all this quite clear. They have also succeeded in presenting their analysis in a form that is slightly less involved, at least, than the incorporation papers of a new mortgage company. This is actually understatement. They have done much more than that. They have employed good primer English with insight and poignancy.

The book was designed to instruct women in the fundamentals of the game—not as players but as spectators. The sections, phrases, and parentheses which are addressed to what is blindly referred to as the fair sex, make extremely pleasant reading. They are marked by an astringent flavor which is refreshing and long overdue. But these sections actually form only a small portion of the thesis. The remainder is straightforward exposition in short sentences of precisely what takes place on a football field from the first kickoff to the final whistle. The Messrs. Wood and Philips should be honored for public service, acclaimed for skill, and rewarded for valor.

R. S.

Brief Mention

The Harvard University Press makes a real contribution to American natural history in publishing Leonhard Stejneger's *Georg Wilhelm Steller* ($6). Steller, a German, recruited by Peter the Great, went on Bering's expedition and left invaluable records of Alaskan natural history, in addition to maps which of course have since been superseded. However, the wild animals, particularly the sea animals of Alaska, have since then been so remorselessly persecuted toward extinction that his account of the fauna is very valuable. Mr. Stejneger, sent up by the American Government on a like mission a century or more later, has made his study of his predecessor's work a labor of love. This book is not only a contribution to scholarship but also a memorial. * * * The last volume of Jacob Zeitlin's translation of *The Essays of Michel de Montaigne* has just been published (Knopf, $5). This translation has taken its place as a standard work. * * * Helen Waddell, whose *Peter Abelard* will be remembered, has dipped into the "Vitae Patrum," that immense collection of saintly biography, and in her excellent style has translated choice bits of that portion of the work which is concerned with the lives of the anchorites of the Egyptian deserts. Her preface to *Desert Fathers* is illuminating. (Holt, $2.50.) * * * Those who like to see our history as an Englishman sees it might consult *The American Ideal*, by Arthur Bryant (Longmans, $3), which consists of the Watson Foundation Lectures given abroad in 1935. His subjects run from Thomas Jefferson through Walter Page, with a chapter on Vachel Lindsay and Alan Seeger. The characteristic fault of the Englishman, namely, that he will on occasions insist upon regarding the United States as an English colony is rather painfully manifested in the chapter on Walter Page, but on the whole the book is sound and balanced.

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PERSONALS

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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACTS OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933

Of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, published weekly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1936.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Noble A. Cathcart, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of *The Saturday Review of Literature* and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, The Saturday Review Co., Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Editor, Bernard DeVoto, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Managing Editor, George Stevens, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Business Manager, Noble A. Cathcart, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) The Saturday Review Co., Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; William Rose Benét, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Henry S. Canby, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Noble A. Cathcart, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Amy Loveman, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; Christopher Morley, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.; E. T. Sanders, 23 Wall Street, New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) NOBLE A. CATHCART,
Business Manager.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1936. Sara Gross, Notary Public, New York County Clerk's No. 454, Reg. No. 8G584. Commission Expires March 30, 1938.

PERSONALS

INFORMATION WANTED: J. B. Lippincott Company, Publishers, Philadelphia, on the occasion of reëstablishing an editorial branch office in New York City, would like to know what was the address of their New York editorial office in the 1860's. The old records of the firm were lost by fire in 1899, and no evidence of the location of the office has been found in the current files. Can any antiquarian or Manhattanite assist?

CONNOISSEURS, GOURMETS, people who know coffee . . . famous blend, rich, winey taste, unforgettable aroma. Not available in stores. Send one dollar for 3 pounds, postpaid within 300 miles (Beyond add 7c for each 300 miles up to 1800. Over 1800, add 35c). Richard H. Toeplitz, 67 Broad Street, New York.

WOMAN PROFESSOR, American and French degrees, seeks part-time work exchange for lodgings University town. Research, typing, tutoring, expert French. Ad-apt-able. Box 578-B.

CONGENIAL YOUNG MAN would spend weekends in Minneapolis with same. Interests: music, arts, nature. Box 587-B.

LIBRARIAN, thoroughly trained and experienced, age 28, pleasing personality, college and library school degrees, open for position with publishing house, book shop or library immediately. Box 589-B.

FOR SALE: Scribner's 1927 with Hemingway's story "The Killers." Good condition. M. Firth. Grand Island, Nebr.

THE REVIEWER, 1631 East Fifth Street, Duluth, Minnesota. Reviews of any book prepared for you to give before your study group. Rates: $1.75 and up.

COUNTRY MOUSE (female) desires correspondence with city rat (male). Minnie.

WILL "J. A." please send "557-B" his address? She would like to answer his very interesting letter.

MANUFACTURER OF TAILORED sports frocks, catering to particular clientèle, wants personal representation. Liberal commissions. Box 465-B.

REASONABLE BOARD—Old college town, beautiful Virginia mountains. Box 773. Lexington, Virginia.

"JAPANESE PRINTS", by Louis V. Ledoux; two illustrations. 12c postpaid. ESTO BOOKLETS, Box 46-V, Pasadena, California.

WOULD TRADE November or December steam-heated bedroom, bath, kitchenette, and living room with open fire, porch, and sunny garden for small New York mid-town East Side apartment. References. Box 590-B.

A YOUNG WOMAN heading Southwestward (tuberculosis) is timid about going (with not much money) alone to a strange place. Have you any help or suggestions to offer? Please write Box 591-B.

ROMANTIC RAMONA invites correspondence with mature cultured widower. Box 592-B.

DO YOU LIKE LETTERS? $1.00 will bring you 12 personally impersonal letters — one for each month of the year — about books, bees, bishops, or babies according to mood. Sample on receipt of stamped, addressed envelope. Box 593-B.

EXCELLENT HOME for two to four children under ten as companions to children, private family. Country. Good school. Box 595-B.

YOUNG MANHATTAN PHOTOGRAPHER, trained, imaginative, broad interests, with car, will illustrate your material in her vivid and convincing medium. Experienced in wide range of subjects. Collaborate with author or group. Box 596-B.

PUBLISHER OR EDITOR: Can you use to advantage an ambitious, attractive college graduate, 25, with literary, newspaper, publicity, secretarial experience, who asks that her daily toil involve training and opportunity for advancement? Employed, but can come to New York for interview. Box 597-B.

SUGGESTIONS WANTED! Where and how can woman, 50, earn living? Background: good family, college, travel, excellent business experience as private secretary and executive secretary private estate. Former work ended by depression and death of associates. Good health, happy, not bad looking, Republican. Box 598-B.

YOUNG WOMAN (Fledgling Author), allergic to sentiments of marketplace seeks secretaryship with Hermit dedicated to an art or science. Special Interests — poetry, bicycles, experimental farming. New York, environs. Box 599-B.

PERSONALS

BOOKSHOP OWNER, experienced and enterprising, desires partner with some capital. Business now pays fair returns on investment. Extra capital required for expansion purposes. References exchanged. Box 588-B.

MANHATTANITE—Quite alone, seeks correspondence with fancy-free damsel. Box 594-B.

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

SO many interesting exciting things happening this autumn Old Q. is addled: must be brief. ☞The zenith around here should be the first National Book Fair, promoted by the New York *Times* and the National Association of Book Publishers. It will be held at Rockefeller Center, November 5-19. ☞"Not at all the usual sort of commercial trade show," says Marjorie Griesser, executive secretary of the N. A. B. P., "it will have a festival character. The auditorium programs, two a day, will introduce many well known and admired authors. On the technical side, each step in book manufacture from MS to bound volume will be shown in action." ☞Q. is specially pleased to learn that the remarkable small-size paper-making machine (from the Franklin Institute of Philly) will be loaned for the show. This fascinating engine reproduces in 20 feet of mechanism the whole process from pulp to finished stock, from rags to stitches. ☞Everybody knows only too well what an author looks like, but few have a notion of the much more complicated and attractive workings of the paper machine. ☞An actual miniature book, prepared for the occasion, will be printed and sold at the Fair.

☞The front cover of the S. R. L. this week is a little Book Fair in itself and merits careful examination. Bob Disraeli, our staff photographer, took the pictures which show the 5 big peaks in the Blue Ridge of an Author's Life. (1) Author and typewriter. (2) Signing contract: Author advancing against Publisher and (we hope) Cash advancing against Royalties. (3) In the Bindery: the book on what the trade calls the Rounder, the rotary gathering and backing machine. (The next step will be Casing-In.) (4) Prospective, we hope, customers, gazing at the work in the bookstore window (Putnam's, on 45th Street). (5) Contented Customer; too absorbed in the book to tell us her name.—As a matter of fact, the book is *Wildflowers of the West Forties*, by Dunraven Dulcet, but we weren't supposed to give that away.

☞Philip Duschnes, 507 Fifth Avenue, has discovered what looks like Sinclair Lewis's first appearance in print: a poem, *December Maying*, in the Xmas 1906 issue of *The Reader* magazine. ☞Frances Steloff, of the Gotham Book Mart, recalls that 20 years ago this month she got out her first catalogue, a little pamphlet addressed from an apartment house on West 123 Street—"Being Part One of My Own Library." She mailed it out to all the names she could think of, and the first order that came in was from that gallant follower of the gleam, Richard Le Gallienne (who wrote to her as Frances Steloff, Esq.) ☞We were looking over some old clippings of perhaps the best book column ever written, *Writers and Books* in the Boston *Transcript* when conducted a good many years ago by Edmund Pearson. We came with amusement on the indignant advertisement inserted in a London paper by old Marie Corelli when she thought the book trade was conspiring Not to stock her novels. Here it was:—

> A SUBSTANTIAL MONEY REWARD will be paid to the Person or Persons supplying AUTHENTIC INFORMATION as to Statements alleged to be made by any LIBRARIANS or BOOKSELLERS in the United Kingdom to the effect that the NOVELS and other WORKS by Miss MARIE CORELLI are "OUT OF PRINT" or "No Longer Stocked." Such statements are UNTRUE, and calculated to injure this Author's material and literary interests, and her Solicitors are instructed to deal with any indisputable proofs of the circulation of this erroneous report. Address Messrs. Maffey and Brentnall, 19, St. Dunstan's Hill, London, E.C.3.

☞Does anyone remember the old book trade jape of long ago? (Yes, we had our laughters even when Q. was young) Q:—*Why is Rider Haggard?* A:—*He's afraid he'll have to Marie Corelli.*

☞The regretted death of Mr. George P. Brett, for so many years president of the Macmillan Company, closed a strong and executive career. Mr. Brett, born in England in 1858, had been with the Macmillan house since 1874. The American branch of Macmillan became an independent company in 1896. ☞Bennett Cerf (Random House) visited Gertrude Stein in the south of France and has taken her over from Harcourt, Brace. ☞Random is the appropriate house for Gertie. She and the Toklas drove Cerf and Jo Davidson to the airport in Geneva, "and made the 1½ hour journey" (says Bennett) "in 6 hours flat. We got lost at every crossroad and actually went through one village four times." ☞He doesn't realize, apparently, how bitterly symbolic this is of Gertrude's prose. ☞Alf Harcourt is a sagacious fellow. ☞Ellery Queen, Stokes's mystery writer who goes round in a mask, has revealed his identity: he turns out to be a couple of commuters from Mount Vernon, N. Y., Frederic Dannay and Manfred Lee. ☞We like the loyal cry of Goodspeed's, 18 Beacon Street, Boston: "You can buy the Kittredge Shakespeare most anywhere in the world, but *we'd* like to fill your order." ☞One of the most attractive announcements of the year is a forthcoming Limited Editions Club issue of Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street* with illustrations by Grant Wood. That should be a lulu bet (apol. to Zona).

☞Mary Frank Mason, in Albany, told Q. that the National Youth Administration has got over 70 community libraries open in upstate (New York) villages and hamlets which had never had any free book circulation. Showed us photos of this grand work, in such mysterious and delightful places as Doodletown, Pine Bush and Cranberry Creek. If you'd like to know what's being done, and how to help (this is a work truly worth while) write to Mary Frank Mason, Rural Library Service, State Education Dept., Albany. ☞Mrs. Mason, years ago, was one of the crew of a pioneering Parnassus on Wheels sent out by the Boys and Girls Bookshop of Boston.

Over the Counter

The Saturday Review's Guide to Current Attractions

Trade Mark	*Label*	*Contents*	*Flavor*
EARTH NEVER TIRES *Darragh Aldrich* (Hopkins: $2.)	Novel	Lad and lass, jest city folks, scram to the land of Minnesota—the wild, untamed, and primitive part—to seek life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And, by heck, they do a purty job.	Earthy
TO RIDE THE RIVER WITH *William MacLeod Raine* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Western	When it Raines it pours right into the old familiar mould. The hero isn't a rustler after all. Guess whom he works for? Guess who wins the range war and the gal?	Reliable
PLAY ON YOUR HARP *Travis Ingham* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Novel	Just a classy bum is Cobby. Been around here and there; dabbled around in this and that. Presto—comes the day of reckoning via an elopement. Ah, Cobby, you've settled down, eh?	Play (boy) ful
FIRE OVER ENGLAND *A. E. W. Mason* (Doubleday, Doran: $2.)	Novel	Intrigue and the gentle game of knifing in the back in the days of Queen Liz, the Spanish Armada, and a cutie called Cynthia. Robin Audrey, hero, helps the Virgin Queen a plenty.	Glamorous
THE FORT IN THE JUNGLE *Percival Christopher Wren* (Houghton Mifflin: $2.)	Adventure	Fans will like fast-moving yarn with familiar Wren hero wading through blood for love of the Intelligence Division of the French Foreign Legion in Indo-China.	Henty

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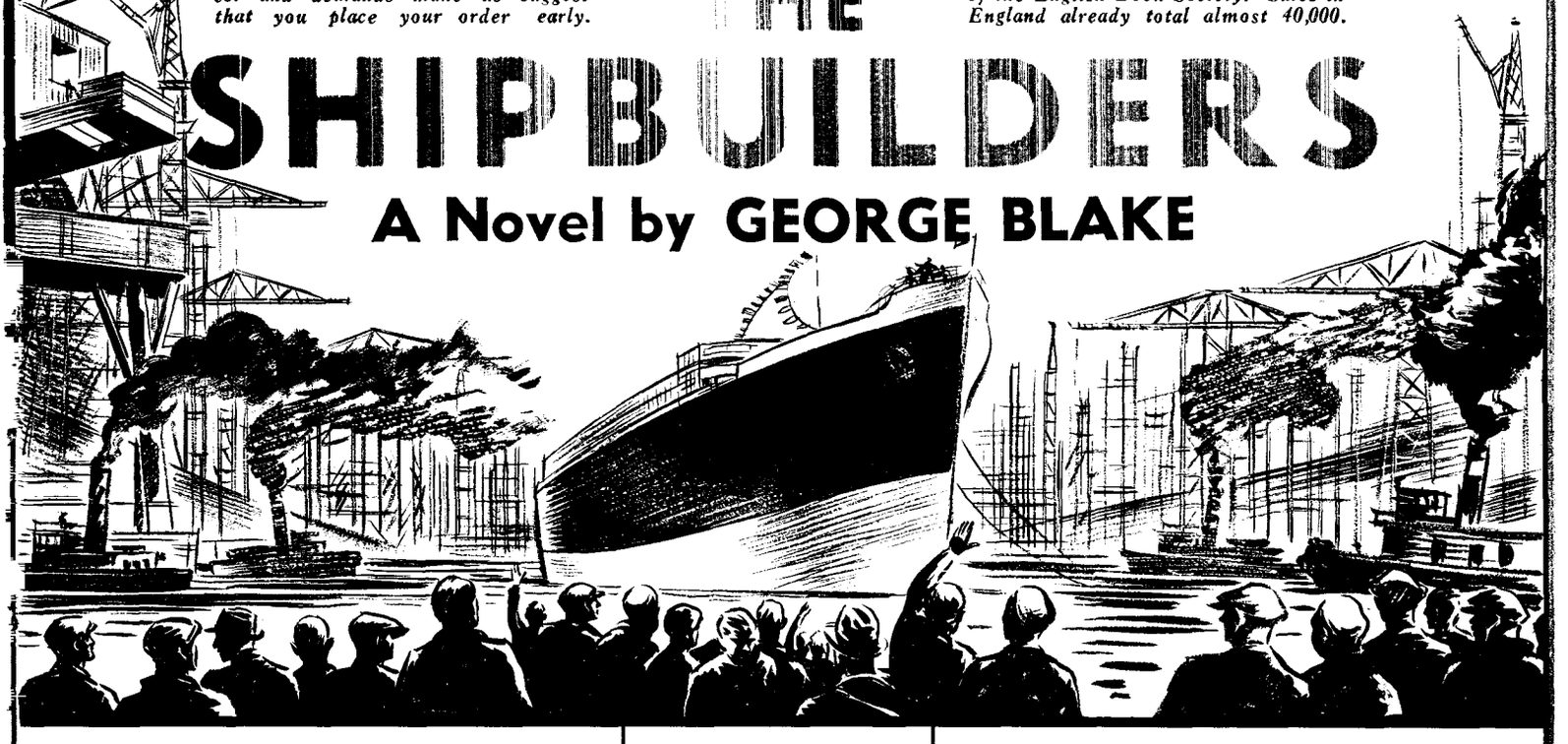

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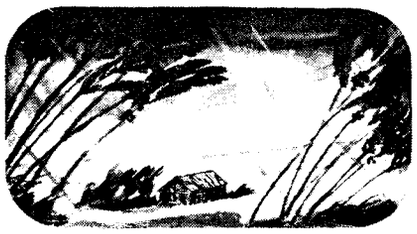

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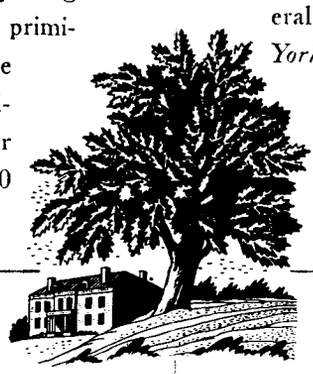

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